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BLACKWOOD'S
Edinburgh
MAGAZINE.

VOL. CXXVI.

17/49

JULY—DECEMBER 1879.



WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS, EDINBURGH;
AND
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1879

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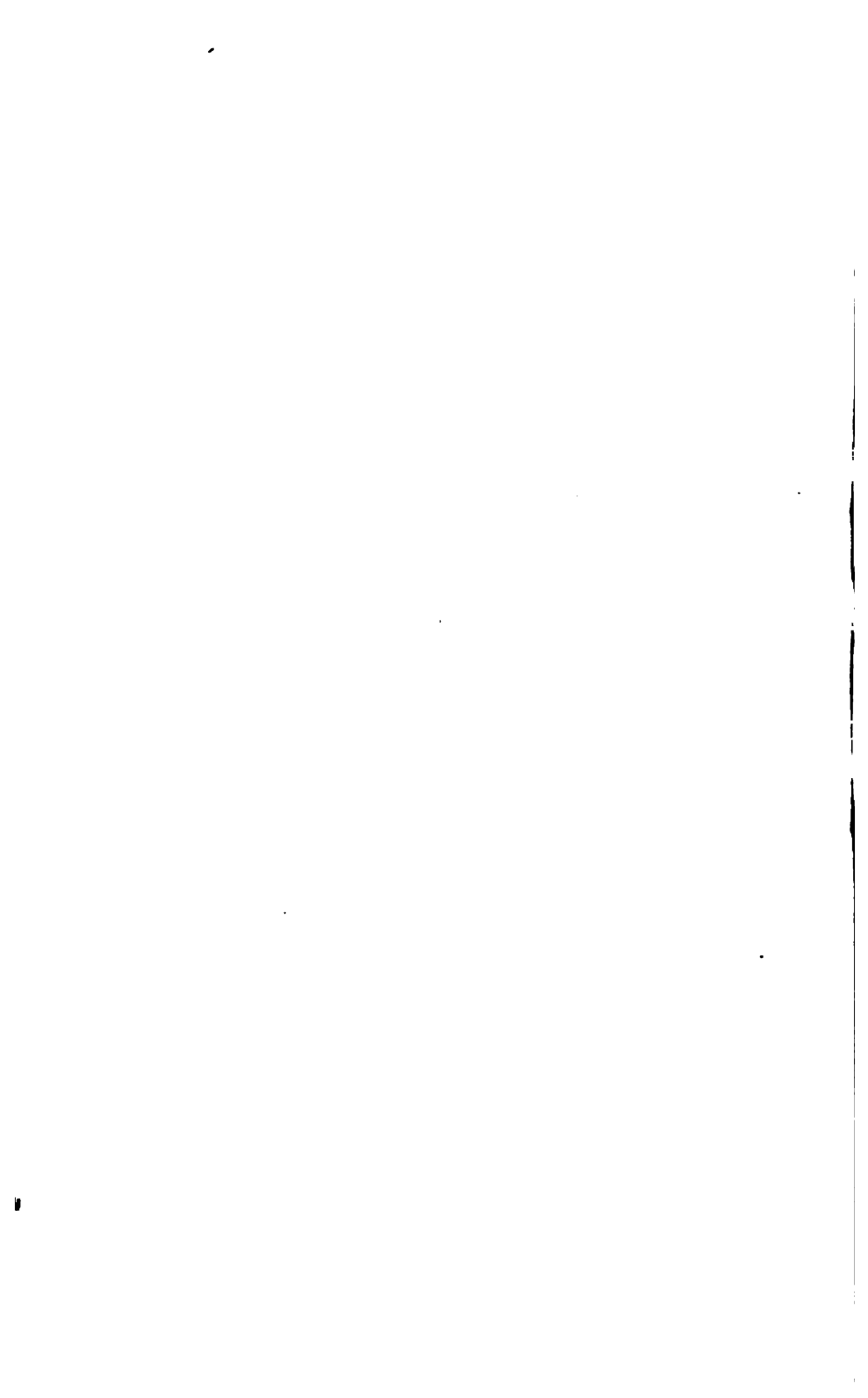
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THE ZULU WAR.

WITH COLONEL PEARSON AT EKOWE:

BY ONE WHO WAS THERE.

I.—THE MARCH.

ON Sunday the 12th January 1879, Colonel Pearson's, or No. 1 Column, commenced to cross the Tugela, and enter Zululand. By the 16th the whole of the troops had crossed and encamped on the other side. I do not intend to dwell here on the passage itself—difficult as it was—suffice it to say, that it was unopposed by the enemy (large numbers of whom could be seen watching us from the distant hills); that the men and the waggons were placed on a pont or raft, which was attached by running gear to a wire hawser stretching from bank to bank, and were then pulled over by oxen on the far side. Efforts to swim the oxen across were not very successful; only those oxen which had before been in Zululand could be induced to enter the water. I noticed two or three fine spans of oxen which had been bought by Government from

John Dunn; these took to the water at once, and so readily, that there was some doubt whether they were not going straight home to John Dunn's house in Zululand, and to give themselves up as a peace-offering from that gentleman (who was at this time at Tugela) to King Cetwayo. Those that wouldn't swim (about 2000 head) were taken over on the pont, which, under the excellent management of the Naval Brigade, worked day and night.

Dawn of the 18th January saw the first portion of the column preparing to advance into Zululand. The troops composing it were:—1st battalion 3d Buffs, under Colonel Parnell; Naval Brigade of H.M.S. Active, under Commander Campbell, R.N.; 1 battery Artillery (2 7-pounders), under Lieutenant Lloyd, R.A.; half company Naval Pioneers; 1 company Royal Engineers; 1 battalion Native Con-

tingent ; Barrow's Mounted Infantry ; Natal Hussars, Victoria Mounted Rifles, and Stanger Mounted Rifles,—about 1000 foot and 400 horse.

As this was the "Flying Column," only fifty waggons accompanied it. Its "objective" was Ekowe, which it was to seize as quickly as possible. At 2 p.m. the same day the troops reached the Inyoni river (12 miles), and encamped on the far side of it. Colonel Pearson sent a messenger back to Tugela reporting "country appears deserted." The Inyoni scarcely deserves the name of "river," being only a small muddy stream, dry during the winter months. The country so far had been wide, open, and undulating, almost devoid of bush ; road there was, strictly speaking, none—a mere track guided our march. The Flying Column halted here for the night, as it was reported later on in the day that a body of Zulus had been seen in front of us, and it was considered advisable to wait till the second portion of the column (expected next morning) should reinforce us before pushing on further.

The second column left the Tugela early on the 19th January, under command of Colonel Welman : 4 companies 99th Regiment ; 1 battalion Native Contingent ; half company Natal Pioneers ; and the Durban Mounted Rifles, composed it. It brought with it eighty waggons, and reached the Inyoni river about noon, and halted (but without outspanning) this side of the stream.

At 2 p.m., the 1st division (which we shall now call the Flying Column) having struck camp, moved on, and encamped on the other side of the Umsindusi river, five miles. The 2d division of the column followed, but owing to the bad state of the track, the exhaust-

ed condition of the oxen, and the length of the line, only about thirty of its waggons, with the troops, crossed the river that night ; its tail had not even left the Inyoni whilst the central waggons were on the Tugela side of the Umsindusi. The river is deep, with precipitous banks, and it required double spans to pull the waggons up on the other side. The site for the camp was well chosen, some 500 yards beyond the river, with open ground all round, but commanded on one side by a hill. Colonel Pearson very wisely decided to halt here the following day, both to let the rear of the column come up, and to rest and feed the oxen, some of which had been in the yoke since 4 o'clock that morning with nothing to eat. As "transport" has and will play such an important part in the movements of our columns in Zululand, perhaps a word explaining the nature of it may not be amiss.

The South African ox-wagon, with a few mule-waggons, composed it. The former was drawn by 14, 16, or 18 oxen as the case might be ; it was heavy, clumsy, and ill suited, with its long span of oxen, to accompany an army, especially in a hilly country. A convoy of 50 waggons would cover about three miles of road. Our column, one time, with its 130 waggons, extended nearly seven miles ! To guard this length of line, a greater number of men are required than can be spared from the column. Cetywayo appears to have discovered that our waggons were inefficiently guarded, for he is reported to have said lately, that he would leave the white man alone in future and attack the waggons with their *scoff* (food). If he does, he will give us some trouble. The oxen are very slow in their movements,

seldom exceeding $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile an hour, and stopping at every bit of hill or bad road. They are driven by Kaffirs, with a boy leading the head oxen. Ten or more waggons would be placed under charge of a "conductor," and the whole under a "transport officer," a military officer specially appointed. This plan has not been found to answer; and a civilian, thoroughly acquainted with oxen and transport-work, has been appointed in place of the military officer, and, I think, very wisely. The military officer in charge of our transport had ability and energy, and spared no pains to make things work properly; but he had only lately come to South Africa, knew not the language, had probably never seen an ox-waggon in his life, and had yet to learn—what he did afterwards—how to make his colonial conductors do their duty. It was no blame to him then, if it was considered that a colonist thoroughly versed in the management of oxen and transport, and with a knowledge of the Kaffir language, would probably work the vast machine better. The position of a military officer as transport officer to a column marching into Zululand is one of the most arduous, difficult, and, at the same time, most dangerous appointments in the column; and much praise is due to those officers who filled these posts, no blame attaching to them if their exertions did not meet with the success they merited. The difficulties attending the South African ox-transport have been found to be so great that it is gradually being replaced—for service in Zululand—by horse and mule transport from England; mules also are being imported from America and from the Cape. Mules do their work well in Zululand. A lighter description of waggon, to hold 2000 lb., will be required, as

there are few at present built. Mules want but little corn, and the grass does not disagree with them as it does with horses. I fear the death-rate of our English horses from that cause alone will be high. Oxen, unless they are "Coast oxen," or "Zulu oxen," die in Zululand, either from the climate or the grass, a point not yet settled. Nearly all our big up-country oxen sickened and died at Ekowe.

On the 21st the column crossed the Amatakulu river, and encamped on the other side of it, eight miles from our last camping-ground. Nothing had been seen of the enemy. The track lay through thorn-bush country the whole way; and at the river, on the far side the bush was very thick. The river was deep, rising above the bottoms of the waggons, but it had a gravelly soil with a good ford, of a semicircular shape: the pull out on the opposite bank was severe, through deep sand, which continued for a mile of our path. The engineers had attempted, by making another ford the day before, to avoid this sand, but on trial it was found not to answer. It took a long time getting the whole column across, and it was dark before the rear-guard came into camp. That alone shows the difficulties we encountered on the road, as we had started at 6 o'clock that morning, and had only come eight miles. The camp was pitched on a rise overlooking a wide and picturesque valley, with some beautiful hills lying in the background. "A fine country Zululand, is it not, sir?" says an old Zulu trader to me. Very fine indeed; and it is a pity no use is made of it. Grass grows rich and plentifully; the soil—where I have been—is a rich garden mould, but there it lies totally uncultivated, save for a few mealie-fields.

We passed the night without

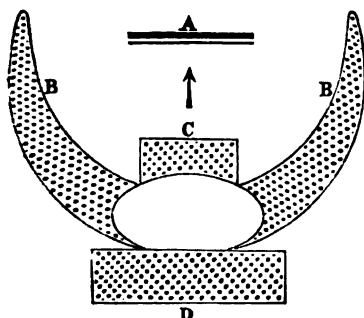
even an alarm ; and at 5 A.M. on the 22d January—the day of Isandhlwana—a day that will for ever be remembered by England, South Africa, and also Zululand—our 1st division, preceded by Barrow's Horse and the mounted volunteers, left the camp, intending to reach Ekowe (eleven miles) that evening. By 7.30 A.M. the advance-guard had reached the Ineyezane river (two miles) and crossed over. Thick bush grew all round here ; but the cavalry having reconnoitred and seen nothing, vedettes were placed round, and a knoll was selected to breakfast on, and a halt of a couple of hours was decided to feed and rest the oxen. The waggons had just begun to park, when a party of the Native Contingent sent to reconnoitre, were fired on. They lost 1 officer, 4 non-commissioned-officers, and 3 men, at once. The firing came from the bush near the river, but the main body was seen to be coming over the hills on our left to surround us. "Position" on the knoll was at once taken by the artillery and the Buffs, as also by the Naval Brigade, whilst our cavalry mounted their horses, and galloped out to check the advance. The Royal Engineers followed them to take up position on the left. Lloyd's guns and the rocket-apparatus now played on the bushes round, whilst an incessant rattle from the rifles of the Buffs and Naval Brigade showed that they were not idle. The 2d division of the column had now come up, and prevented our right from being turned. An attempt to outflank us on our left, by a body of Zulus in a kraal, was frustrated by an advance of the Naval Brigade, covered by Lloyd's guns, which drove the Zulus out very speedily. The whole force then retreated, our oops following them in extended

order for a short distance. The cavalry were not allowed to pursue ; nor were the Native Contingent—who had not shown much courage during the fight—permitted to "blood" their assegais. The ground was strewn with dead bodies, many burnt and scorched up by the shells. It was estimated then, that 300 must have been killed ; but from inquiries since made, it must have been nearer 600 killed and wounded. About 5000 attacked us.

Such, in brief, was the battle of the Ineyezane. The place was well chosen ; and had those in the bush near the river reserved their fire till the main body had got closer, or had fired on us when, with our long train of waggons, we were passing through the bush, they might have given us some trouble. As it was, the issue was not a moment in doubt from the commencement. The Zulu formation of attack is probably known to most of your readers, but for those who do not, suffice it to say that they attack in the shape of a figure which is called the "Beast," as shown in the accompanying woodcut.

They make a feint with one of the "horns," whilst the other, concealed by the long grass, is sweeping round to encompass you (this they did with their right "horn" at Ineyezane). The "chest" then advances, and by numbers swallows up the enemy, shut in by the "horns." The "loins" never come into action, but are kept at a safe distance, and only engage in the pursuit. At Isandhlwana, where a fearful fight was raging this very day, in which 800 whites and 300 blacks were cut to pieces, the two "horns" got completely round the camp, those who escaped making a run for it, between the two points. The

indunas, or chiefs in command to drive the column out of Zululand. The men of the Zulu force at Ineyezane, had received orders



- A, The supposed enemy.
- B, B, The horns of the Beast.
- C, The chest.
- D, The loins.

had been smeared with consecrated mud (*mute*) by Cetywayo, to make the bullets glide off them. They advanced, then, with the greatest confidence. The first shot was fired about 8 A.M., and the last at 9.30. Colonels Pearson and Parnell had both their horses shot under them. Our casualties were : killed, 8 whites, and 4 blacks ; wounded, 16 whites. I visited the ground after the battle, and found dead Zulus in heaps of eight or nine, and in one place counted as many as twenty-five. No wounded were to be seen.

The column pursued its route at once, the waggons slowly toiling up the steep and winding road, which here ascends to the Ekowe heights, and bivouacked for the night on a ridge about three miles from the battle-field. The rear of the column did not get in till past nine o'clock.

On the 23d we moved off at day-break to march to Ekowe (six miles). The road was an ascent the whole way, winding round and round the hills. The distance from our bivouacking ground to Ekowe, as the crow flies, was not more than two miles. No sign of a Zulu to be seen anywhere, and at 10 A.M. the head of the column took possession of Ekowe Mission

Station, the tail coming in about three o'clock. Arrangements were at once made for intrenching ourselves and making a fort, as it was intended to leave our surplus stores here with a small garrison, and move on to Ulundi (Cetywayo's kraal) in a few days.

Ekowe, the Norwegian Mission Station of Mr Oftenbro, is built on the summit of a high range of hills overlooking the sea, and a wide extent of beautiful hill and dale, deep ravines, and thick bush. Far away northward were rugged precipitous mountains, such as we had never seen hitherto, and over which, or round which, we were told our future path lay. The station consisted of the church, school, and parsonage, and a little distance off were a few more houses — these were all built of brick with thatched roofs. Round them all were gardens, orange-groves, plantations, blue-gum trees, &c. The avenue of orange-trees below the parsonage was considered the finest in South Africa. These groves and plantations were, I need hardly say, very speedily cut down to make way for the fire of the white man. A bubbling stream, with thick bush overhanging its waters and keeping them cool, ran at the foot of the orange-grove. How

calm, how peaceful, it all looked when we marched in that bright morning ; now soon to be converted into as hideous a spot as there was in Zululand ! The site, however well adapted for a mission-station, was about as bad a place as could have been selected to build a fort on. It was commanded on three sides by rising ground within rifle-range, whilst on its fourth a ravine, covered with dense bush, ran up to within a few yards of it, lending a hand to any large body of Zulus intending to attack the fort. The bush was in a few days cut down ; but the ravine, a large portion of which was safe from any fire from the fort—now being constructed—remained. Towards the south-east, at a distance of 1400 yards, was a high, rocky, conical-shaped hill, with bush on its far side growing up to the summit. Up this hill the Zulus used often to creep at night and fire on the vedettes in the morning as they were being posted, and observe what was going on inside the fort. Fortunately for us they never discovered they could fire *into* the fort from this hill, or from the other high ground surrounding us. Towards the south-west, at a distance of 500 yards, was also a thick bush, which extended for miles towards some big kraals ; otherwise, the plateau on which the station was built was open grass-land.

The reasons that this particular site was chosen, when, perhaps, others in the vicinity might have been better suited for defence, were that the church and two of the buildings would be useful as a hospital and storehouses ; that the water-supply was good and plentiful. Ground was therefore broken, and the making of the fort commenced. The officers and men set to with a will, as they were very anxious to advance farther into Zu-

luland, and the sooner the fort was completed the sooner they would go. On the 24th, a convoy of 50 waggons, under Major Coates, 99th Regiment, was sent down to Tugela to bring up more supplies. It arrived safely. With the exception of a few night alarms, all went smoothly till the 29th. A good height of parapet had been thrown up, and some of the troops were encamped inside of it. On this day, just about noon, a messenger arrived from Lord Chelmsford, telling of the total defeat of Durnford's column, and that we might expect the whole Zulu army on us. It was left to Colonel Pearson to decide whether he thought himself strong enough to hold the fort or not : in the latter case, he would march down at once to the Tugela. No particulars of the defeat were sent ; and it was not till the 7th February that we fully learnt of the disaster that had befallen our comrades at Isandhlwana.

A council of war immediately assembled ; and it was decided, by a small minority, to hold the fort at all costs. All the cavalry, however, with the two battalions Native Contingent, were to go down at once, as we had not sufficient corn for the horses of the former ; and the latter there was no room for in the fort, had we even been able to feed them. Some of the cavalry ought, I think, to have been kept, even at the risk of losing them. There was plenty of grass in the vicinity, as well as mealie-fields. From the kraals round they could easily have seized old mealies—which are what all horses eat in Natal, and which form their staple food instead of corn. In losing the cavalry we lost the “eyes and ears” of the force. How could we inform ourselves of the movements of the enemy ? Without them we might be surprised any day ! How

were we to guard our cattle, on whom we depended for our daily food? I think it was not very long before we found what a mistake had been made. The order, however, had gone forth, and certainly no time was lost in carrying it out; for at 2 P.M. Major Barrow and the Mounted Infantry, the Victoria, Stanger, and Durban Mounted Rifles, and the Natal Hussars rode away from the camp, followed by the two battalions of the Natal Native Contingent. They all arrived safely at Tugela by midnight that night, having seen no signs of Zulus on the way. They left all their baggage behind in the camp, and had literally nothing but what they stood up in. A message was sent to Colonel Ely, who was reported to be a few miles off bringing up a convoy of supplies, to hasten on as fast as he could, and to leave any waggon behind that could not keep up with him. Extra spans of oxen were at once sent out to him; but he found it necessary to abandon eight waggons with their contents of flour, biscuit, lime-juice, sugar, &c. Some weeks later how often we wished we had had those stores to eke out our supplies!

The following day (30th) all the troops came inside the "intrenchment"—for fort it could scarcely be called yet—tents were discarded, and the men and officers slept under the waggons, some seventy of which had been placed round the inside of the parapet,

and where required, as traverses, &c. The garrison now at Ekowe was as follows:—

Combatants.

Staff	7
Six companies Buffs	609
Four companies 99th	380
Naval Brigade	174
Royal Artillery	26
Royal Engineers	96
Natal Pioneers (blacks)	50
Native levies	15
Total—1292 whites, 65 blacks.	

Non-Combatants.

Commissariat and Transport	12
Army Medical Department	20
Waggon-conductors	15
Drivers and leaders	270
Native servants	20
Total non-combatants—47 whites, 290 blacks.	

Total left in Ekowe Jan. 29th—
1339 whites, 355 blacks.

Our armament consisted of—

1200 Martini rifles, with 380 rounds per rifle.	
1 Gatling, with 127,000 rounds.	
2 Rocket-tubes, with 83 rockets.	
2 7-pounders, with 500 rounds.	

We had stores sufficient, as then calculated, to last us only three weeks, but later on we found we had considerably more.

How we fared, shut up in this fort in the heart of Zululand, cut off for many weeks from any communication with the Christian world, with starvation threatening, and an ever-watchful, brave, and savage foe surrounding us with increasing hosts to destroy us, I will relate in the next chapter.

II.—THE DEFENCE.

We had now 1300 whites and 350 blacks constructing a fort in the heart of Zululand. I will now relate the history of our lives there. Our cavalry had been sent

away, and it was accordingly found impossible to protect, and also to graze, the large number of transport cattle—about 3000 oxen and 60 mules—we had with us. Orders

were therefore given to send 1000 or more oxen away to Tugela in charge of their drivers. They would probably be captured, but we hoped very soon to be in a position to recapture them. We could not kill them, as how could we bury so many, and at the same time proceed with the work of the fort? On the 30th January, therefore, about 1000 oxen and 28 donkeys were sent away, by different paths, to Tugela. One lot, with the donkeys, were captured within a mile of the fort—the Zulus mounting the latter, and riding off on them. Of the others, about 500 were driven back again by their drivers, the latter having seen large numbers of Zulus in front of them; the remainder we never saw again. A few boys were missing, but most ran away and left the Zulus to drive their oxen. The same morning 90 slaughter-oxen, which had been placed for safety during the night in the ditch of the parapet, and had jumped out, were cut off and captured by the enemy. The question of endeavouring to recover the eight waggons abandoned by Colonel Ely the day previous, was raised, and volunteers from among the conductors of the transport train were called for to go down with spans of oxen and bring them up. £50 per loaded waggon, and half that for "empties," was offered them. Four volunteered to go that night; but reports coming in later of large numbers of Zulus being about, the attempt was abandoned. I think had they gone they would probably have lost their lives, and the Zulus would have had more of our oxen, and some horses as well, to take charge of.

The work of the fort progressed rapidly, under the direction of the engineers. It was surprising how much the transport gear was in for-

tifying. The waggons were placed round the inside of the parapet a few yards distant. When loaded up with corn, blankets, biscuits, and other stores, they made excellent traverses. The baggage—and it was a large quantity—of those who had gone down to Tugela was also piled on the waggons. It was first opened, though, to abstract any amateur medicines it might contain in the way of chlorodyne, Eno's Fruit-Salt, Pyretic Saline, &c., besides other medicines, as we were badly furnished with that necessary. The search was successful, and effervescing drinks appeared to be much in favour with the Zulu campaigners, whilst there was no end to "Cockle's Pills." The yokes to the waggons made good blindages to the blinded batteries; the reims—strips of hide soaked in grease—the engineers found useful in binding up fascines, &c. The wire from the trektows, by which the waggons are drawn, made entanglements, caught in which I should very much like to have seen Master Zulu—he would have thought it "uncanny." Our transport officer couldn't have been well pleased at finding all his gear disappearing; but in an emergency such as this, the first thing to be considered was to make ourselves secure as rapidly as possible, using all available means to do so.

The shape of the fort was an "oblong," east and west sides 300 yards each, north side 120 yards, south 180 yards. The church was used as a hospital, the schoolroom and parsonage as storerooms. All other buildings were demolished. None but the soldiers were allowed to be in the fort during the day, the Natal Pioneers and drivers of the transport train being admitted only at "retreat." To prevent any chance of a Zulu spy entering, all Kaffirs had to wear a blue patch of cloth

sewn on their coats. They found some difficulty about this, as some had not even a shirt to sew it on to, but tied it with a string round their necks. The wily Zulu, however, had he been so minded, would have taken coat, as well as blue patch, before attempting to enter.

The men and officers constructed shelters for themselves under the waggons, and with a good sail-cloth falling over the sides, made themselves very comfortable.

When Major Barrow left us, he left behind a few sick horses under charge of a lieutenant of the 99th, who had just joined his—Major Barrow's—corps with fifteen men of the 99th Regiment. The officer had had no training under Major Barrow, and the men had not yet been put on their horses, not being able to ride. With this promising lot, the nucleus of an "irregular horse" was formed under Lieutenant R—; a few Alexandra Mounted Rifles, that escorted Colonel Ely's convoy up, were also attached to it; and when anything particular was to be done, such as a raid on a kraal, &c., volunteers from the officers of the various corps sometimes attached themselves to it, but a "sure find" was among the officers and conductors of the transport department. Both officers (we had two now, one joined with Colonel Ely) were ever ready to come, and brought the conductors with them, and sometimes an infantry force, formed of blacks, armed with some most ancient weapons that had been served out to the Native Contingent and been left when they went down. This irregular horse was chaffingly called the "Uhlana." Under the perseverance and energy of its leader it became a very useful body, and to it alone are we indebted for resting without fear of surprise during

the day, so long as they were posted. At night, being so few, they were brought in, as also in foggy weather. For a considerable period they were our only guard to the cattle. Horses were provided for them from among the non-combatants, who had Government horses in charge. The horses at night were put in the ditch, picketed to a rope, only those that were private property being allowed inside the fort. The cattle were put in a laager of waggons, constructed in the ravine on the south side of the fort. The shape of this laager had to be suited to the flanking-fire that could be brought on it from the guns and parapet of the fort. Unfortunately, this shape (a triangle, with an acute angle at the bottom of the ravine) did not suit the laagering of cattle, and in one night over forty were found crushed by the rest at the bottom of the laager. The acute angle was then cut off; but it was always a "cattle-trap," as the conductors used to call it, and we lost many oxen in it, but it could not be helped, as there was no other place considered by those in charge of the defence of the work safe to put them. A large number were tied on the glacis on the east side of the fort. These were safe enough, and we lost but few of them. Had, however, a determined attack been made, they would probably have been killed by our own fire. I mention this to show the difficulties we had to contend with, irrespective of simply holding the fort. Our food was at this time, of course, plentiful enough, as we were on full rations, and had not yet dipped very deeply into our private stores of jams, potted meats, &c. We were most of us up at *réveillé*, and engaged all day in making the fort, and later on, in road-making. The "last post" sounded at 8 P.M.,

when lights were at once extinguished, and we gave ourselves up to sleep, occasionally disturbed by the alarm bell (the church bell) ringing, when the parapets would be manned at once, and each one repair to the post assigned him. The reader has now a fair idea of our fort, and how we lived in it, I hope; and I will resume the thread of my narrative.

On the 7th February, further particulars were sent us of what hitherto we had known as "Durnford's defeat." We heard now that four companies of the 24th Regiment had been massacred, besides a large force of colonial troops and natives. The names of those killed were also given. Among them we all found friends and comrades whom we had known. We were horror-stricken, cast down, but not dismayed. A feeling of revenge and determination to hold out to the last pervaded the camp. The despatch went on to say,— "Should wish to see the Naval Brigade garrisoning forts of Lower Tugela. Yourself and staff ought to be there also. After a successful action would be your best chance of withdrawing a portion of your garrison—otherwise a risk. Endeavour to arrange for the holding of an intrenchment requiring a lesser garrison. Your best field-officers should remain in command. Bring back only what baggage, &c., is absolutely essential. The sick and wounded should come in empty waggons. I trust that any attack made on our posts may be simultaneous. We are ready for it." At a council of war that assembled at once, opinions differed as to the possibility of carrying out Lord Chelmsford's instructions. We knew that a large force of Zulus (estimated at 20,000) were lying between us and the Tugela: also, large bodies of Zulus were round the fort,

watching our movements. Would it be possible for 500 infantry, encumbered with waggons, to—1st, leave the fort unobserved? 2d, to break through the mass that lay in our path? Remember, thirty-five miles of difficult country were between us and the Tugela; and, judging from the experience of the slow movement of oxen and waggons on the way up, should we not render ourselves open to be surrounded? And when we had fought bravely till our last round was expended, might not the massacre at Isandhlwana be repeated at the Ineyezane? My own opinion is that it would have been; and subsequent events have only confirmed that belief.

Another argument against half the garrison leaving the fort was, its size. Lord Chelmsford in his despatch says, "Arrange for the holding of an intrenchment requiring a lesser garrison;" but on reference to the engineers, it was found that the fort was so situated that it could not be thus arranged, and that a new intrenchment would have to be thrown up elsewhere. The fort itself had so great a perimeter (about 800 yards) that the garrison left behind would not suffice to man the parapet adequately, and also protect the cattle when grazing.

Anxious though Colonel Pearson was to carry out the views of his general, the reasons for not going down were so strong that he decided to communicate them to Lord Chelmsford before proceeding farther in the matter.

Previous to this, Colonel Pearson had applied that reinforcements might be sent him, to enable him to hold Ekowe as a forepost till Lord Chelmsford could advance again (this was after hearing of the Isandhlwana disaster). He added,

"if we retired to the Tugela, we should most likely have all the Zulu army at our back, and be obliged either to destroy all our ammunition and stores before we left Ekowe, or abandon them on the march if attacked, as in all probability we should be, by overwhelming numbers."

The reinforcements could not, however, be sent him, as all the troops that could be spared were required in Natal; and they would, moreover, eat up his provisions, of which he had, he thought, only three weeks' supply for the garrison then in the fort. On the 6th February, Colonel Pearson wrote suggesting that a convoy of at least twenty waggons "should be sent as soon as an escort equal to a battalion of 600 or 700 could be got together. We are better off than I thought we were; and if our cattle are left to us, we shall be able to get along for over three weeks from this day, and with many essentials for some time longer."

To this letter Lord Chelmsford replied in his despatch of 8th February: "Contents of your letter dated 6th February received by telegraph. My belief is your garrison should be at once reduced to the minimum which you consider is necessary for its defence; this will give us more time for throwing in supplies. There will not be a force at Lower Tugela for six weeks at least, sufficient to insure a convoy to Ekowe, and unwise to attempt it; but if you withdraw surplus garrison you will have troops enough for a very efficient flying column at that place. Add 100 or 200 to the 400 you suggest for garrison, but cut down your defences to meet the reduced garrison. Your own presence is absolutely essential at Lower Tugela.

Mine is required all over Natal. A head commander required to look after every post of his command. Latest news, Zulus will not knock their heads against our posts, but will raid into Natal. All more necessary for a movable force at Lower Tugela. Other columns are too weak for me to decrease them to increase yours—each must hold on as best they can until reinforcements arrive; thus you must read my instructions. Details I leave to you, only let us know when you propose to fall back. It would not do to face too great odds; but you might perhaps manage to reach Umsindusi (where every available man from Lower Tugela should be sent) without your move being discovered. Each man should carry 100 rounds, two days' food. Bring no wheeled carriage. Line of march to be most compact, and no delay on the march if a few shots are fired at you. The garrison left at Ekowe must be on the alert, as it will be imagined you have deserted the post."

When Lord Chelmsford wrote the above he had not then received Colonel Pearson's despatch, setting forth the difficulties there were in dividing the garrison. To this despatch we all waited anxiously for an answer, but waited in vain, our communications being completely severed, and no more letters received till the 20th March. The garrison remained therefore as it was in Ekowe.

Our fort now (10th February) was practically completed, though for many days afterwards additions were made towards further increasing its strength. Ditches 7 feet deep and 12 feet wide, flanked by *caponnières*, or by the parapet itself. Wire entanglements on the glacis, stakes in the ditch below the guns, and in that below the

parapet held by the Naval Brigade. Three entrances—the main over a drawbridge—were made. A metallised roadway was being made through the centre of the fort. This was most essential; for when it rained—and it did often for three days and nights in succession—the soil was so deep in mud and slippery, that communications were slow. The drainage, also, was attended to; but I fear the Naval Brigade, who occupied the lower end of the fort, would say “with but little effect,” for they always stood in a sea of mud during these heavy rains. Where the difficulty lay, I cannot tell.

The stench at times, especially at night, was quite sickening. We had over 300 Kaffirs sleeping in the fort, and even one Kaffir pollutes the air for some distance round him. The men's night latrines too, were just outside the gate of the fort (a shallow ditch, earth shovelled in, in the morning, and later, tin-lined boxes), and cattle were all round us. I do not think, though, the horrible smell came from them. I never smelt anything like it before when surrounded by them; and a “cow-dung” floor in India is proverbially considered a healthy thing, and not unpleasant in its smell. Everything was done to keep the fort clean, but that did not seem to affect the smell.

Our guns and rockets were now in position, the men to work them being sheltered by sand-bags, soda, &c. The two 7-pounders were placed at the S.E. and S.W. angles, the rocket battery at the N.W. angle, and the Gatling on the east face of the parapet. Jam and potted-meat tins were applied for by the artillery to make shells out of. A few were fired, and though going no distance, yet they would have placed many a Zulu *hors de*

combat had they attempted a “rush;” they injured the parapet somewhat, however.

On Sunday the 9th, Holy Communion was administered. A large number of officers and men attended. Our clergyman, the Rev. Mr Robertson—a missionary who had been twenty-seven years in Zululand—announced to the men the disaster at Isandhlwana, but bade them be of good courage; they were Christians, fighting in a righteous cause, and must succeed.

What gave us more trouble, and caused more anxiety than anything else, were our cattle—how to keep them, and how to feed them. Our chief transport officer seemed to have no rest day or night regarding them. No guard could at this time be spared for protecting them, so they had to keep within the vicinity of the fort, inside our small line of vedettes—and the grass was soon eaten up here. Added to this, the transport officer was harassed with continual messages brought him that Zulus were about, and then he would have to get his cattle in, their only guard being two or three conductors on horseback, and the Kaffir boys. These reports would as often as not turn out false alarms. The oxen would lose their feed for the day, and dropping from weakness in the laager, would be crushed. Then there would be foggy days, on which they never went out at all, and more would die. Then a report would come in that the cattle had strayed, or been attacked by Zulus, and he would be off on his horse to see what a reinforcement by one man could do. Often during the night have I heard his name called by the field-officer on duty, and told that all his cattle were off. Having roused a few boys, he would sally out, sometimes alone with them, sometimes with

his assistant, and come back and report—as I heard him one night do—“They were only Kafir dogs, sir.” I would turn round and thank heaven I was not a “transport officer!”

On the 11th, a messenger was, by greed of gold, persuaded to start with a letter for Tugela; eleven other Kafirs took French leave and disappeared with him. Only one succeeded in escaping the Zulus, and he was not the letter-carrier!

We used to see several hundreds of Zulus about, “trekking” down towards Tugela; cattle too would be seen. Whether they thus showed themselves to induce us to sally out to them, I can’t say. If they did, they never succeeded, for Colonel Pearson was much too wise and cautious a commander to be caught in a trap of that sort. Beyond sometimes sending a few shells amongst them, when they came too near the fort, no notice was taken of them. Women too might be seen in the early morning carrying mealies away from the mealie-gardens in the vicinity of the fort, and trekking down in long strings after the warriors who had preceded them. Were we not justified then, from what we saw, and what our native scouts affirmed, in believing that a large army lay between us and Tugela? Our “Uhlans” burnt a few kraals in the neighbourhood, but without killing any Zulus: still, burning a kraal is of more importance than one would at first suppose. The Zulu likes his comforts as much as the white man. His comforts lie in having a snug kraal to retreat into when it rains, and plenty of mealies. If you destroy his kraal, he has to go away to a friend’s kraal some distance off and eat his mealies. The white man thus gets rid of an offensive neighbour, and helps himself to his

mealies and pumpkins! The “Uhlans,” therefore, did good service. They also effected a surprise on the high hill on our south-east, and drove the Zulus off it for ever, killing and wounding a few. This hill was called the “look-out hill.” Till the “Uhlans” cleared it, however, it was only a “look-out” for the Zulus, who would come up there in the early morning, and, as I before explained, shoot at the vedettes whilst being posted. It was no use firing back at them, for they would dodge behind the rocks that crowned its summit. A thick bush on the other side offered a good defence and safe retreat should any force be sent against them. The “Uhlans,” alone, did not think themselves strong enough to take it by force, and Colonel Pearson would not risk sending troops up. It was surprised, however, by six “Uhlans” on foot one morning, who had forestalled the Zulus. They never came on it again, even when a tempting bait was set up by the Royal Engineers in the shape of a pole stuck up in the ground, which if pulled out would explode a charge of dynamite and send wily Zulu capering in the air. Master Zulu was too crafty though, and let the mysterious stick and hill alone.

There was a splendid view of the country round from the top of this “krantz.” We could not see Lower Tugela itself, where our hopes of assistance lay, but we could see the mouth of the Tugela river and H.M.S. Active riding at anchor off the coast. Away inland we could see the rugged but beautiful hills of Zululand, and wonder when we should be marching over them; and looking back, could see the winding road up which we had toiled radiant with hope, and the idea that after a succession of brilliant conflicts, such

as that at the Ineyezane, we should march on and take the king's kraal. This was only a few weeks back, and now half of us wanted to retreat to Tugela to keep the foe from invading Natal, and that the other half might eat and live ! We found we had, instead of only three weeks' supply of food, very nearly two months', but were rather short of groceries: the issue of these, therefore, ceased to all Kaffir boys, and a money allowance was given them instead. They made a great outcry at this, not that they really cared so much for the groceries, but the Kaffir is a proud conceited fellow, looks upon himself as just as good a man as the white man, and this difference in their rations showed him what we thought of him. For the same reason he refused to eat draught-oxen, would go without meat rather than touch their flesh ; and yet if an ox (draught) was condemned to die on account of sickness, and shot, he would try and get a bit of the carcass. In Natal itself I have seen them cutting strips of flesh out of oxen that have dropped exhausted from the yoke on the road. Later on, when all our slaughter-oxen were eaten, and the white man was eating draught-oxen, the Kaffir had no objection to it.

Our meat was now reduced from $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb. to $1\frac{1}{4}$ lb. The latter amount was ample. We added now to our rations, too, by mealies and pumpkins, procured by the transport boys and the Natal Pioneers, and bought of them. These Kaffirs were often fired on, but the whole time we were at Ekowe only one boy was killed by a Zulu sitting up in a tree. There seemed to be some sort of understanding between the Zulus and the boys. The transport officers told me once that their boys used to take it turn and turn about with the Zulus to rob

a neighbouring mealie-field. "First come, first have," was not the rule; but one day our boys forestalled the Zulus on one of *their* days, and there were "words." Pumpkins, too, were brought, and were a great addition to our ration. Boiled as a vegetable or put into stews ! frittered pumpkins ! pumpkin - pie ! (just like a good apple-tart) pumpkin-squash !—there is no end to the variety of dishes you can make with it. Its tops make a nice green vegetable, too, as do also lily-tops, which we got from neighbouring streams. We rapidly became good cooks, and a friendly spirit of rivalry existed amongst the different messes. No one could discover how to make liquor, of which by the middle of February there was scarcely any left. A plant grew in some of the fields which the Zulus made beer of, but it was not ripe enough in our time to try making it. There was a great longing for tea, but our ration did not allow us many cups of it ; but I think we should have missed the loss of our cup of tea more than we did the liquor, which really, after the first few days, we ceased to think about. Our stores had come almost to an end, and the announcement on the 20th, of an auction of the private stores of those who had been sent back to Tugela on the 29th January, to take place the following morning, was hailed with general delight. To show our "reduced circumstances" as regards food, and our "anything but" as regards money, I give the prices that some of the articles fetched. Tins of cocoa, 7s. 6d.; bottle of pickles, 25s.; sardines, 12s.; curry powder, 23s.; Worcester sauce, 25s.; tin of milk, 23s.; lobster, 18s.; salmon, 15s.; dubbing for boots, 9s. 6d.; matches, 6d.; ham, £7, 10s. ! But tobacco was the most valued, 20s. being paid for $\frac{3}{4}$ lb.

I should think when the owners receive their money they will turn Zulu store-keepers. The salmon and lobster were bought by a private soldier; he took a tin under each arm, went outside the fort, seated himself, and there and then ate both tins! He "wasn't going to waste it on friends," he said. On the 21st a small raid was made by Colonel Pearson in person, to drive the Zulus out of a bush in the vicinity of where the cattle grazed. These beasts, which gave us so much trouble, and yet were so necessary to our existence, had to go some distance now to graze, and a company of infantry was detailed daily as guard to them; but they and the cattle ran some little risk, being one and a quarter mile distant from the fort, and plenty of thick bush and kraals about them. The transport boys, armed with some Tower rifles, entered, under the direction of their officers, boldly into the bush on one side, whilst some of the infantry went in at the other. No Zulus were at home, and we all went back to the fort. The following day shots were heard in the direction of the cattle, and the transport officer and the "Uhlans" galloped out, followed by two companies of infantry. It appears that about thirty Kaffirs came out of a bush and fired on the two conductors in charge of the cattle. They returned it vigorously, and killed one man. The Zulus retired then, and were being reinforced when the "Uhlans" rode up and pursued them, driving them across a ravine, and following them up on the other side till they had all disappeared. They then burnt a kraal and came back. There were only a dozen of them out, and their horses were quite beaten. Their leader led them quickly and well, and had evidently worked them into shape.

On the 24th another raid was made by Colonel Pearson in person, on a kraal not far from the fort, but being down in a valley it was difficult for the mounted branch to get at. The Natal Pioneers, with some transport boys, advanced on it; the Zulus fled, and the kraal was burnt.

A road was now begun to be constructed from the fort to a point on the old road where we had bivouacked for the night after the battle of the Ineyezane. It would shorten the distance to Tugela by four miles at least, and avoid a lot of bush country. The Zulus used to attack us occasionally in small numbers, but without doing any harm, and it served as some excitement to the monotony of our life. We longed for news more than anything, except, of course, the approach of a convoy, which we were constantly expecting and looking out for with glasses in hand. The bands of the Buffs and 99th Regiment used to try and cheer us up of an evening; but we got to know their airs so well that they at last became monotonous. Mr Robertson, too, gave us a few lectures on Zululand, which interested the men greatly. Many of us began to get aged in appearance, and nearly all got thin; whether the latter arose from anxiety or want of *fatty* food, I cannot say. Our appetites were enormous; and for my part, I got plenty of food. Men began to sicken now, too, with a low nervous sort of fever, which served to take all wish to live out of them. Those horrid little animals, the weevils, got into our biscuit towards the end of the month, and I overheard a soldier who was pulling a muck-cart along cry out to his comrades, "Poor starved-out Ekoweians! nothing but biscuits to eat, and they full of weevils." From the appearance of

the man, he certainly throve on *weevils*. The biscuit when baked is quite good, even if full of weevils ; and some mealie-meal (ground mealies) that had got full of them, was pronounced by some as all the better for the little animals. This mealie-meal formed our staple food for breakfast, and was much liked eaten as porridge.

That hard-worked, ever-anxious man, our "transport officer," made a small raid on his own account one day, recapturing, quite unaided, four Government mules that had strayed a little distance from the others, been shot at, and driven off by the Zulus. The guard, coming out in the afternoon, saw them driven off, and sent in word to him. He galloped out, ascertained in which direction the mules and the Zulus had last been seen, followed them up, found them placed between two belts of bush—evidently as a ruse—circled round them, and drove them in, one on three legs only, having been wounded in his fetlock-joint ; another was wounded

in the rump. He explains that he wasn't fired at, because the Zulus supposed he would be followed directly by the rest of the "Uhlan" corps, which would be a bigger slaughter for them. The guard was too far off to render any assistance, and were not in sight, they said.

Tobacco was worth gold now in the fort. The men had been for a long time without it, and the officers had to count the number of pipes they could afford. Literature, in any form—now that the novelty of being shut up in a savage country, without knowing what might be our future fate, had in some degree worn off—was eagerly seized. It was amusing to see an officer intently reading a newspaper several weeks old, as if it held the very "latest intelligence" (which it did to us, though), or poring over a book, which, when you looked at, you found to be the 'Franc-tireurs,' the 'Boy-Hunters,' or some other equally amusing and instructive work, which he had by good fortune picked up from somebody in the fort.

III.—THE RELIEF.

It was now the beginning of March, and we had been without any news of the movements of the rest of the invading army since the 8th of February. On the 3d of this month, however, a bright light was seen to appear at intervals on a hill in the direction of Tugela, whither our anxious eyes were so often directed. It was some time before we realised what it was : some said it was the grass or a kraal burning, but at length it dawned on us that it was Tugela speaking to us. Great was our joy ! Faces that had for long borne an anxious and desponding look, assumed a more hopeful aspect ; new energy, new life, seemed

to be instilled in us, as we found all was not over. Natal had not been desolated, and we had friends still at Tugela who would come to our aid. We could not read the flashes the first day they appeared ; but on the second, a sergeant who had been through the signalling course read, "I shall attack on the 12th ; sally out when you see me to ——" More we could not make out, and we knew not how to answer back again. Mirrors we had, strange to say, when one remembers that each officer is only allowed 40 lb. weight of baggage ; but we did not know at present how to use them. Other means were therefore resorted to,

but in vain. A black frame 12 feet square was swung on two up-rights by our D.A.Q.M.G., with the hope of "flashing" with that; but at the distance we were—fifteen miles or more—the frame would be merged in the ground. Rockets, however, were fired, with the view of letting them know that we had seen and understood their signalling; but as it was a bright, cloudless day, I don't suppose these were seen.

The message sent caused great excitement. By the words "sally out," we were to go out, fight, and return. Some were of a different opinion, and said it meant that the whole garrison were to sally out, and force their way to Tugela.

On the 1st of this month, a big raid was made under Colonel Pearson on a large military kraal belonging to Dabulamanzai, distant seven miles from the fort. From it a thick bush extended to within half a mile of the fort, through which a large force of Zulus could pass unperceived. Raids on our cattle by small parties were also constantly made from it.

At 2 A.M., 400 infantry, 1 gun, Natal Pioneers, and about 30 "Uhlans" marched on the kraal and arrived within a mile of it without our advance being discovered, when an attempt by the horse to surround some herd-boys that showed themselves woke up one of the outposts of the kraal, and the alarm was given. The advance was then continued, and we halted within a few hundred yards of the kraal and shelled it. We could hear the loud voice of the chief inside it giving his orders, and the cattle being removed; but when 15 "Uhlans" rode down to take and burn it, it was completely evacuated: There were 62 huts in it. The Zulus were followed for a short distance by the

Natal Pioneers and some of the "Uhlans," and a few shells were fired amongst them; but owing to the thick cover, there were but few hit, and they retreated to the top of a high hill, overlooking another big kraal of Dabulamanzai's, and prepared to give us a volley should we attempt to burn it. The risk, I conclude, was considered too great, for the "retire" sounded for the Natal Pioneers and the "Uhlans" to come back, which they did, pursued and fired at by the Zulus, who rushed down from the hill in swarms directly they saw our men's backs turned; they also filled the bush, alongside of which our road home lay the whole way. We therefore left the road, and struck off across country, the Zulus following us, and occupying every hill and bush in advance from which they could fire on us, and at the same time harassing our rear. The "Uhlans" divided themselves into an advance and rear guard, and by constant rushes in front kept the way clear for the column, at the same time that the rear-guard kept the enemy from closing in on the rear of the column. There were several boggy streams to cross, which the horses and gun found some trouble in accomplishing; but we arrived at the fort soon after 10 o'clock, without any casualties. It was a sight well worth seeing, the quick, decisive way in which the Zulus ran from cover to cover—no delay, no crowding—they seemed to know intuitively what hill or bush to make for, and get there at once; and when compelled to retreat from them by the "Uhlans," would make off to the next position near which our column would have to pass. In the rear they were equally active, keeping as close as our rear-guard would allow them on the heels of the column, seldom showing

themselves, but harassing us the whole way. It was fortunate that they had few Martinis amongst them and were such bad shots, the nearest approach they made to hitting one of us being knocking a carbine out of a conductor's hands. If we could only get our men to skirmish like that! The habit is born with them though, and has not to be "drilled" into them, as into our soldiers; besides, we could never make a British soldier so active as they are.

By the 8th we had eaten all our fat slaughter-oxen which our butcher had brought up with us, and had now to eat the much-despised draught-ox. He was at first not so bad as we supposed he would have been; but later on, as the grass got scarcer, he got thinner, till there was not an ounce of fat to be found on him. Our transport officer, moreover, would only give up the large bony oxen, as he said they would "surely die;" but his small, fat Zulu oxen he said he wanted to take us away with. It was no use telling him we should "surely die," and there would in that case be nothing to take away: he was obdurate, and pronounced the meat wholesome — which it was; and very nice — which it was *not*. Some one suggested that perhaps he killed a fat little ox for his own mess! Without "fat," our tarts, our cakes could not be made; our "pound of flesh" would not fry without it! Boot-dubbing was found to be a poor substitute; and "waggon-grease," which some of us inveigled the transport officer to supply us with, was found not to answer very well, being mixed up a good deal with tar. We had therefore to do what we could without fat; but our scarecrow-looking bodies showed how bad was our best.

The Zulus used to shout across

ravines, and chaff our herd-boys on the thin state of the oxen they were herding, and our deserted state, saying, "Pray that the sun shines a long time to-day, for you look on it for the last time. We are coming to take coffee with you to-morrow morning." And another time: "Why don't you take more care of Cetywayo's cattle and get them fatter? He will want them soon."

The fort was finished, but there was still plenty of work to be done on it. The waggon traverses had to be replaced by sod ones; the parapet, which for some occult reason had been thrown up without leaving a berm, was being washed into the ditch by the heavy rains that fell often now, and had to be riveted with turf. Huts for a future garrison, if not for the present one, were to be built; they were to be made of wattle-work, the sides $1\frac{1}{2}$ foot thick, filled in with earth, the roof of wattle covered with mud. Each was to hold a company. The road through the fort occupied the leisure time of many men in trying to get it into some order. Posts were put up at the different ranges round the fort, and the men made acquainted with their distances, so that in the event of an attack, no shot might be wasted.

One of our vedettes had a narrow escape. He was taking his post one morning, when some Zulus sprang out of the long grass on him, one seizing the mane of his horse, which, fortunately for him, reared up and galloped home with him, receiving an assegai-thrust in the rump as it did so. The Zulus fired after him, one bullet hitting the lock-plate of his carbine, which was slung across his back, and thereby saved his life. On examination, he was found to be wounded in six places, and two of his fingers shot

off. Poor young fellow, he bore his injuries very bravely, and instead of alarming the fort by galloping in showing his wounds, he rode in quite quietly as if nothing had happened. I saw him at Tugela some weeks later; he was getting on all right. Large bodies of Zulus were often seen now about the country, and cattle also being driven down to the Ineyezane. Rumour said they were going to attack us, but I thought they were only collecting to pounce on us when we attempted to "sally out" on the 12th; and some were moving down to reinforce the army already at the Ineyezane. We all devoutly wished they would "come on;" they would have got such a warm welcome as would effectually have stopped them from interfering with our movements. Messages were being daily flashed to us, and the one about sallying out was repeated constantly; but we could not yet ask them if it meant that the whole garrison was to sally out, or only a portion, and which was to return.

On the 11th a Kaffir bearing a white flag came into the fort with a despatch. He was welcomed with loud cheers, being the first letter received since the 8th February. On investigation, however, his despatch was fourteen days old, and merely said we should soon be relieved. His feet showed no signs of fourteen days on the tramp. He wore a greatcoat of the 24th Regiment which had no tears in it from the bush-life he stated he had been leading. He had on a scarf recognised as belonging to an officer at Tugela. His answers to our questions also not being considered satisfactory, he was made prisoner on suspicion of being a Zulu spy. A few days afterwards, we found our friend spoke and understood

English well, though, when questioned, he had disclaimed all knowledge of it, so that he might the better ascertain our intentions.

A bigger attack than usual was made to-day, on the road-making party, by the Zulus. Lieutenant Lewis of the Buffs had a narrow escape. He was in the act of directing a man of his company where to aim, when a bullet, cutting through the peak of his helmet, grazed his left temple, knocking him down, but fortunately only inflicting a flesh-wound; and beyond having a severe headache for a day or two, and a couple of black eyes for some time, he was none the worse: he will, however, carry the scar to his grave; but that, I daresay, he will not mind. The working-parties, and also the cattle, were all brought in, and a larger force sent out in the afternoon; but then, of course, not a Zulu was to be seen—they had all gone home to recount the retreat of the "white man" in the morning. They are wonderful hands at appearing when you least expect them, and disappearing again in the most marvellous manner. They got quite skilled in how to avoid the big guns. When they saw the gun pointed down, they would go in the long grass, and not rise till it had been fired. I remember on one occasion watching them crossing an open road under the fire of one of our guns: they collected near the road in a place sheltered from our fire, and then ran across by twos and threes to another safe spot on the other side.

We heard to-day, by flashes, of the reinforcements coming out from England, and also that "the Duchess of —— had given birth to a daughter." We were greatly rejoiced over the first message,—not but it was highly satisfactory and comforting to us to hear that the

Duchess of — had a daughter, and we wished her and her little one good luck ; but the first held out a speedy prospect of relief, which was still more consoling.

On the 13th occurred the first death amongst the officers, Captain Williams of the Buffs dying of low fever and depression. It cast a gloom over the whole fort, as who could say who would be the next ? There was a great amount of sickness amongst both officers and men, from which, too, no one who was once seized appeared to rally, though an awning was spread on a hill a short distance from the fort, and the sick struggled out, and were carried out to it daily to breathe a little fresh air. The fact was, we had no means for treating them when once they were taken ill. There was a great demand for cooling and effervescing drinks, such as Eno's Fruit-Salt, Pyretic Saline ; but, as I pointed out in my last chapter, there was but little of these in the fort. When ill myself, I had a constant craving for them, and owing to the kindness of another, could partially assuage that thirst ; but not so all, and, of course, not the poor soldier.

We were prepared to-day to march down to the Ineyezane at any moment. Yesterday was the day we should have gone, but it rained too hard for the relieving force to come up, but we certainly thought we should hear something of them to-day. A force, therefore, of 400 infantry, 170 Naval Brigade, 30 Royal Engineers, 50 Natal Pioneers, and 1 Gatling gun, were all in readiness ; 2 mule-waggon carrying 15 rockets and rocket-tubes ; 3 days' corn, 3 days' groceries, 1 day's preserved meat, and the camp-kettles, would accompany the column, whilst 6 oxen for slaughter would be driven with it ; 8 pack-oxen

were placed at the disposal of the officers. The men were to carry 1 day's cooked rations, 1 day's biscuits, 100 rounds per man, and also their greatcoats ; so they would be heavily weighted for marching and fighting in such a country as Zululand, and with such an active foe. Could it be expected that the force above detailed, by no means in good health, heavily weighted, would be able to break its way through the cordon that surrounded it ? I know none of us, or very few, thought we should get through without experiencing such a loss as would leave but a small number to march into Tugela, and that the 1000 men coming to our aid would be equally outnumbered. So it was with no small pleasure that we saw the sun come out, and that bright little light in the distance flashing the following message : " Relief postponed to 1st April : 4000 British troops and 2000 black will come up from Tugela and relieve the whole of your garrison : 8000 troops on the way out—15 transports." There was an audible sigh of relief all through the fort when this message was known, for those who would have been left behind in the fort would also have had a very anxious time of it.

The oxen had to be taken so far to graze now, and had been so often threatened and fired on by the Zulus, that two companies of infantry instead of one had now to be sent : this made the working-parties come still harder on the garrison ; but I think, all the same, that most of us were all the better for having something to do, although it was under a terribly hot sun. I never knew a sun anywhere which raised blisters on one's face and hands in so short a time ; and if you got the smallest scratch, and it was exposed to the sun, a nasty eating sore

would be caused, which would become what they call a "Natal sore," very painful, and very difficult to heal. There were few in the fort that did not appear with a piece of rag round one of their fingers, or their noses enveloped in cotton wool, with some white powder on it, giving them a most unearthly appearance.

I mentioned that eight pack-oxen were placed at the disposal of the officers proceeding down with the column. These had been broken in and trained by our two transport officers, and caused much fun in their breaking, though many said it was the height of cruelty. But everything worth learning in this world is learnt by either mental or bodily pain, and the would-be pack-ox was fortunate in only having to suffer a little bodily pain in acquiring the art of carrying burdens. He would first be caught and separated from the others (by no means an easy matter); he would then be brought on his knees by fastening a rope round his fore-legs, a sharp-pointed stick would be run through his nostril, a ring of cord fastened in, and he was ready next day to receive a load. His first one was usually a Kaffir boy, whom he would very soon get rid of; then a sack of sail-cloth filled with earth would be fastened on him by numerous straps—you cannot tie anything tight round the *girth* of an ox, or he is sure to die. He would generally kick about and plunge for the first ten minutes, when, growing tired, and seeing the uselessness of attempting to get rid of his burden, he would quietly go along with it. A couple of days would in most cases break him, but sometimes a vicious animal would be got hold of that they could do nothing with. An ox would carry between two and three

hundred pounds, depending on his *breed* and the distance he has to go. I think we had about 30 broken, but our transport officers gave up breaking them, as they had no material to make the saddle-bags of. A large number trained to carry packs would do away with many a heavy waggon, and they could move on each side of the road too, leaving the latter clear for troops, and shortening considerably the length of the "baggage-train."

It was not till the 14th March that we discovered how to answer the messages sent us from Tugela by the flashes. The first message, strange to say, that was understood there, was one sent by our "artillery officer." "How do you hold your glass in the right direction?" "By keeping it fixed on you," was the answer. A long stick placed horizontally one foot above the ground, pointing towards them, was therefore placed as a "line of fire," and the mirror worked in that direction: with a little practice those in charge soon were able to send messages. The Kaffir boys were much amused at it, but laughed when told we were talking to them at Tugela; they wouldn't believe it at all at first. The Zulu apparently, in a very short time, found he could not prevent us communicating with each other, and relaxed his vigilance in stopping runners, for a few days later a runner came up unmolested.

Our day's ration now was,—meat, $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb.; flour or Boer's meal, $\frac{3}{4}$ lb.; sugar, $1\frac{1}{4}$ oz.; compressed vegetables, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; salt, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; tea (three times a week), $\frac{3}{4}$ oz.; coffee (four times per week), 1 oz. It was by no means a meagre ration. The meat was about twice what our teeth could get through; the flour to us was useless, as we had no baking-powder or fat to make anything

with it; the sugar and tea allowance left no room for waste; no more mealie-meal for our morning's porridge—it was all gone! We used to grind away at fresh mealies we had gathered, but they did not make a good porridge, and were not at all healthy things to eat that way. What we all longed for was fruit or vegetables; but we were left to our own resources to supply them, and the supply depended on the boldness of the Kafir transport boys in robbing mealies and pumpkins. Cape gooseberries there had been, but they were all eaten up now, alas!

To insure that we should at least have some meat to eat, in case the Zulus succeeded in driving off our cattle, a hundred or more were taken from the transport and handed over to the commissariat for daily issue. These hundred were to be specially grazed and guarded; but as they were never allowed to go beyond half a mile from the fort, the "special grazing" became "no grazing," and when their carcasses were served up for us to fatten on, they were more like a dried-up old shoe than ever. The transport officer was then requested to change them for those that, at great risk, he had taken to long distances for grass; but he declined, as thinking it a losing game, but recommended they should all be sent out with his cattle, and get fat. It was proposed to vary our food by the addition of "Bell-tongue" (dried ox-flesh); but as nobody appeared to know how to make it, this luxury was lost to us. The fact is, you can only make it during the dry season, as continuous sun is required, whereas we had a good deal of rain just now.

On the 15th I went up our "look-out" hill before breakfast, and saw the neighbouring hills perfectly black with Zulus. I

watched them for some time; they appeared to be trekking or marching from the direction of the Ineyezane (where they had doubtless been waiting for our proposed march down of the 12th), and making for the valley of the Umlalazi, which lay to the north of us. By this valley they could collect unperceived close to the cattle, and make a raid on them. Their way of marching was peculiar, and deserves notice. A tiny speck would appear on the top of a hill, it would soon after grow bigger in circumference, till it attained that of a huge circus. The "speck" was the "look-out" man of a regiment, which, when he had reported "all correct," would gradually come up the hill and form round him in a circle. The Zulus always meet together in circles, and have their kraals in circles. After a short consultation — squatting the while — the circle would slowly unwind itself, and move on till again only the "speck" would be left; he would wait till joined by the "look-out" man of the next regiment, when he would hasten on to join his own corps. The same manoeuvre would be followed on approaching the next hill. There must have been several thousand Zulus *visible*, let alone those I did not see. Supposing that these swarms had all come up from the Ineyezane, where would the thousand men it was proposed to send to our relief from Tugela have been now, and where would our small force have been? It was a fortunate escape from what would probably have proved another Isandhlwana.

The fort, of course, soon knew of these swarms of Zulus being in the neighbourhood, and precautions were taken against attack: the cattle were at once driven in, and special "look-outs" sent to watch

them; but after nine o'clock not a Zulu was to be seen anywhere; and you would have—if you ventured to believe your eyes—said that there were “no Zulus in the neighbourhood.”

On the 16th we lost another officer, Lieutenant Croker of the Naval Brigade: such a fine young fellow, and a general favourite; he was only nineteen years old. He died of dysentery: he was almost cured, but got a relapse from not being careful of himself, and died. It was very sad losing one so young!

A vedette was killed to-day. Half-a-dozen Zulus rushed out on him soon after he had been posted for the day; his horse was wounded, and throwing him, galloped home. He must then have run back—judging by the trodden state of the grass—till he could run no farther, and turned round to face his foes, and received seventeen wounds from them! He must have dropped his carbine when his horse threw him—that and his ammunition the Zulus took away. There were two men posted not 600 yards off; and instead of galloping to the man's assistance—which act alone would probably have driven the Zulus away—one rides to the fort to give the news, whilst the other remains quietly a fixture on his post. A Court of Inquiry assembled on them, but I do not know the result. A party of Kafir boys was sent out, under the transport officers, to search the bush for his body; but it was found in the grass not far from his post.

A short time previous to this, some Zulus had surprised an officer of the mounted infantry, when placing his men, by concealing themselves behind a “lean-to,” which the vedette had made the day previous, to keep the sun off. The horses, frightened, had galloped

away, throwing one rider in doing so. The officer, of course, stayed by him, and eventually drove the Zulus out of the post. They had got so bold and cunning now about attacking the vedettes, that a force of infantry was detailed daily to patrol the ground they had to occupy before they took post; but they never saw the wily Zulu during these patrols.

We heard to-day of the arrival of the 91st Regiment at Durban, and the landing of the men of H.M.S. Shah. This appeared to us as an earnest of what was to follow, in the way of reinforcements, and we rejoiced accordingly.

Three days and nights of rain, in torrents, came now, during which no news could be either sent or received. The fort was a dismal sight in such weather: mud up to your ankles; drip, drip all round you—and fortunate you were if it was not drip, drip on you. Every one shut up beneath their waggons, only those on duty, with soaked coats and unhappy faces to be seen moving. The transport must have had a pleasant time of it on days like this, for no sooner were there any signs of the rain or fog holding up for a bit, than away they went to get the cattle out to graze as fast as possible; and perhaps they had no sooner got them out when the weather would become thicker than ever, and they would be brought in, to be sent out again probably when the weather once more cleared.

On the 20th a “runner” brought up a despatch. It was the first we had received since the one of the 8th February! He was welcomed with quite an ovation, and his bag eagerly searched for letters or newspapers; but he had only half-a-dozen of the former, as it was feared he might be captured by the Zulus, and the letters lost. The despatch

informed us that troops would march to our relief on the 29th inst. Private letters told of the excitement there was at home on hearing of the Isandhlwana disaster, and how troops of all arms were rapidly being sent out to our assistance. My pen fails me to describe the joy there was in the fort at finding our communications by letter once more restored, and the certainty of a speedy release from our long imprisonment. A small kraal on the other side of the Umlalazi valley was shelled by Colonel Pearson from our side of the river to-day, and then burnt ; it had often harboured a raiding-party on the cattle or the vedettes.

The discharge of fowling-pieces was prohibited now, as tending to create false alarms in the fort. Our sport had been limited to a few plover and some "ottodores"—the latter about the size of an English fowl, with large wings, and which makes a cawing noise as it flaps along. The Kaffirs declared they were carrion, and for a long time we would not eat them. At length a sportsman, yielding to the pangs of hunger one day, ate one, and pronounced it delicious. Raids were accordingly made on them whenever they appeared. They eat very much like a good teal, and we lamented the loss of them.

On the 23d, it was flashed to us from Tugela, "Cetywayo is trying to draw you out, by pretending to have gone away." He might have "tried" a very long time before he could take in Colonel Pearson that way. Two veritable Zulu spies appeared before the fort to-day, with white flags in their hands, purporting to have brought a message from Cetywayo, to the effect that if we would march down to Tugela and leave his mealie-fields uninjured, he would not molest us ; that his *indunas* or chiefs were only

on the other side of the Umlalazi river ; and if we would come over and treat with them, he would guarantee that no harm should happen to us. This message, coupled with the one we had just received from Tugela of Cetywayo's intention, left no doubt that a trap was being laid for us ; but into one there was little chance of Colonel Pearson falling, for his answer was to make the two gentlemen with the plausible message—prisoners.

The following day the despatch of all private messages by flashes was forbidden by Lord Chelmsford. As some very lengthy effusions of a domestic nature had been sent, occupying the time of those appointed to send public ones, it was just as well to stop them. The price charged by the fort had been five shillings a message. The sums thus collected were added to a "relief fund" we had opened in the fort, and which now amounted to upwards of £70.

On the afternoon of this day a message arrived from Lady Frere, sending "her best wishes to all in the fort ; that we were constantly in her thoughts, and all news of us she communicated to friends." This kind and thoughtful message cheered up many a sick heart, and did more good than boxes of medicine.

An order now came for us to bring all our waggons (130) down with us when relieved by the force coming up, and to put half spans in them, if we had not enough oxen for whole ones. This message stirred up the transport officers, who wanted to take the waggons out of the fort to repair them previous to their going down. As these waggons were our shelter, we objected strongly, though tents were offered in their place. Some of the waggons were still required as tra-

verses, too. So the day was put off for taking them out, much to the vexation of the transport department. The kraal in the ravine, which had been the cause of so many deaths and sickness amongst the oxen, had been broken up, and two kraals constructed with its waggons on the east glacis. These were round in shape, and under the guns of the fort: they were on fairly flat ground, and the cattle did much better in them. What a site for a future mealie-field would that of the old kraal be, being in many places three feet deep in muck!

The heat was now very great in the daytime, though the nights were cool: the number of sick was by no means diminishing. All horses, private property, that up till now had come into the fort at night, were ordered to go into the ditch. I wish we could have put all our Kaffirs there too: the smell arising from them at night was sickening. We had had a few cases of typhoid, and two more deaths amongst the officers.

On the 29th was telegraphed from Tugela, "Come down with 500 fighting men, when I am engaged. Four thousand men will leave Tugela to-day or to-morrow, and arrive at Ekowe on the 3d April. Expect to be hotly opposed." In the enfeebled state in which the garrison now was, 500 fighting men could not be spared to go far from the fort, and I believe some such message was sent back. Our first newspapers since we had been shut up arrived to-day by a runner, and were eagerly read. They contained full accounts of the battle at Isandhlwana, and the despatch of troops to Natal, but not much was said about Ekowe—perhaps they did not know in England at the time of writing that we were completely cut off. Lord Chelmsford sent Col-

onel Pearson a complimentary letter, thanking him for holding out so long and gallantly, and announcing his promotion to brigadier-general. We were all very much pleased to hear it.

On the 30th, the "Intombi" misfortune was communicated to us; this took place so far back as the 12th March! There were three large Zulu armies reported in the vicinity of the fort, but they could not make up their minds to attack it, and put off—what for them would have been a very evil day—till they should annihilate the column coming to our relief. The cavalry of this force were seen the following day not more than ten miles off. A column was detailed to sally out, if necessary, from the fort the next morning—six companies infantry (350 men), Naval Brigade, Royal Engineers (50 men), mounted infantry, Natal Pioneers, and one gun composed it. Each man was to carry eighty rounds. On the following day, April 1, a heavy storm came on in the afternoon; but towards evening the weather cleared, and we could distinguish a black-looking mass to the south-east of us, in the direction of Ginghilovo: this was Lord Chelmsford's column in its laager of waggons. They must have had a rough time of it on the march during that storm.

At 6.30 A.M. on April 2, guns were heard by us in the direction of the General's laager. We all went out to the edge of our plateau to watch the battle, which, as the crow flies, was not more than four miles off, though twelve by road. The Zulus attacked the laager first on one side, then on the other, being received on each by a perfect blaze of fire. Still they continued to press on in a succession of waves, and came within thirty yards of the laager, I am told; but the fire was

too severe for them, and at half-past seven o'clock they began to retreat, which was quickly turned into a rout by the mounted infantry and Volunteers under Major Barrow, followed by the Natal Kaffirs, who were eager enough to attack the flying Zulus. It was curious watching this conflict, and knowing that on the issue of it depended pretty well our own existence; but from the first the result was never a moment in doubt. The Zulu loss in the immediate neighbourhood of the laager was 700, but many more were cut down in the pursuit, and bodies were found long distances off some days afterwards. Ninety Martinis were taken, besides numerous other firearms.

The loss of the column was 1 officer and 6 men killed, 2 officers and 29 men wounded.

The Zulu force was 11,000, and that of the column 4000 whites and 3000 blacks.

It was the Zulu intention, we heard afterwards, to have attacked the fort that day, and to have smoked us out with burning faggots, but they could not resist the temptation of first annihilating the relieving column, which they took to be much smaller than it really was, and that then, with their men emboldened by their success, they would attack the fort with greater confidence. A large Zulu army was therefore held in readiness to prevent our going to the aid of the other column, or attacking those sent against it in rear; but the country between the two columns was so broken that we could not have gone to their assistance except by the road, and as this was, as I said before, twelve miles long, such a movement would have been nearly useless.

A congratulatory message was sent from General Pearson to Lord Chelmsford, on the success of the

battle. A message was now "flash-ed" to us that we should be relieved the next day by three regiments, that Ekowe was to be *abandoned*, as the road to it from Tugela was so difficult for the transport that all future operations would be conducted on the coast road, and an entrenched camp formed in the neighbourhood of Ginghilovo. All waggons, stores, and other articles which we could not take down with us, on account of insufficient oxen, were to be destroyed.

As you may suppose, we were very sorry to hear that our impregnable fort was to be given up. The fort that had taken us so much trouble to construct, and which we had held for ten weeks, was to play no further part in future operations, but was to be abandoned to the Zulus after all! We could not help feeling greatly disappointed about it, but we had the satisfaction of knowing that it had rendered great service to Natal, and had probably stayed an invasion of that colony. We began to destroy and burn according to the orders sent, throwing the old Tower rifles and odds and ends down a well which had been sunk outside the fort, but which had proved a failure as regards water. We hoped, when covered in, the Zulus would never look for them there. The Transport officer said, however, that if 400 oxen were sent him, he could take down all the waggons and everything there was of value in the fort. The oxen were therefore asked for, and a message came back that they should be sent. The work of destruction was therefore fortunately stayed. On the afternoon of the 3d, the column detailed on the 31st March—about 500 whites and 50 blacks, and the mounted infantry with 1 gun—left the fort under General Pearson to meet the relief

column, coming up by the road our Engineers had made. Now was the last chance the Zulus would ever have of attacking the fort. The men left behind were all busy loading the waggons outside the fort, the oxen were just coming in from grazing, with no laager into which they could be quickly driven, but had to be fastened to their waggons; more than half the fighting force had left the fort, and were out of sight. But fortunately the Zulus were not equal to the occasion, and contented themselves with only looking at us.

A solitary horseman is seen towards 5 P.M. galloping up the new road to the fort: he had an officer's coat on, and we could see a sword dangling from his side. Who is he? a special messenger from Lord Chelmsford, with important despatches? Our doubts were soon dissolved by the arrival of the horseman, who, dismounting, proved to be Mr N—— N——s of the 'Standard.' "First in Ekowe!" he exclaimed, with a self-satisfied air; "proud to shake hands with an Ekoweian," he continued, shaking hands with those round. We were all very much gratified at his condescension, and asked the "news." A second horseman appeared approaching the fort, his horse apparently much blown. "Who is he?" we asked. "That is the gentleman of the 'Argus' newspaper. They had had a race who should be first in Ekowe, the 'Standard' winning by five minutes. I fear they did not meet with that warm and hospitable welcome which they expected, for there seemed some difficulty about getting a dinner for themselves and horses, and the next morning the gentleman of the 'Argus' was in great trouble about his breakfast. A hospitable welcome we were not able to give

them, as we had barely sufficient food to satisfy our own enormous appetites and those of our horses, and this they must have been prepared for. The gentleman who seemed in difficulty next morning about his breakfast, in a not very flattering account he wrote of the fort and its inmates to his paper, described us as having passed weeks ago into a condition somewhat resembling that of the prisoner of Chillon! At about 6 P.M. Major Barrow and his mounted corps arrived, and were, as you may suppose, warmly welcomed by us. It was nearly ten weeks since he had left the fort; none of us thought then we should have been so long separated. After much hand-shakings, and congratulations on our being relieved, Major Barrow passed on to the camping-ground appointed for Lord Chelmsford's column. Soon after this the column that had left the fort under General Pearson to meet the relieving column returned, the country apparently being clear of the enemy, and their assistance therefore not being required. They reported that General Pearson had remained behind with Lord Chelmsford, and that the latter's column would not be up for some hours, as they found great difficulty in dragging their carts—they had no waggons—over the new road which we had made. A weary time of waiting and expectation followed, which many succumbing to went to bed. The others did not have their patience rewarded till nearly 12 o'clock, when the relieving column, composed of the 57th and 91st Regiments and third battalion 60th Rifles, arrived at the fort and moved on to the camping-ground, followed by loud cheers from those in the fort.

The relief of Ekowe was accomplished! Orders were at once issued for its abandonment at noon

the following day, and to march on Ginghilovo, bivouacking *en route* at our old bivouac ground. Two days' rations to be taken with us—any remainder to be given up to the relieving force—we had about two days' to give over, but both these and those rations we took down with us were of short-measure—tea, flour, sugar, vegetables being very short; meat we had plenty of. Had we not our draught oxen? So you see that with the exception of the latter commodity, we had not much food in the fort when relieved, and certainly on the fifth day would have had *nothing* to eat.

We had to work hard to get off that day. Several waggons were still in the fort, loaded up as traverses. These had to be unloaded and reloaded outside to take with us, but at 2 P.M. the head of the column marched away, though it was nearer 5 P.M. before the rear guard left, such was the terrible length of the train of waggons we took with us. A short distance from the fort we met Lord Chelmsford returning with Barrow's horse from burning kraals not far off. They had captured one Zulu, who, with one end of a rope round his neck, the other held by his mounted captor, presented a comical appearance.

We bivouacked on our old ground, six miles from the fort by the road we had come, three by the other, or less still, but we did not move by it: as the relieving column had reported so badly of it, we thought with our 120 waggons the longest road would prove the quickest one.

At 7 A.M. on the 5th we were again on the move, but in consequence of a drift having to be repaired by the Engineers, a mile beyond the camp, we were delayed a couple of hours, and Lord Chelms-

ford's column caught us up before our tail had left its old ground. Looking back, we could see Ekowe was already set fire to by the Zulus, who were watching us from the plateau on which it is situated. It would have been a good thing to have placed a few "infernal machines" about the fort as a lesson to them to keep out of the "white man's" house in future. We passed the eight waggons abandoned ten weeks before. They had not (with the exception of one thrown down a ravine) been injured at all by the Zulus, and could soon be put straight again. The corn and other stores had been left to rot, and emitted a most offensive smell. At a few places on the road the Zulus had attempted to cut it up, but they are too lazy a race to work hard, and the relieving column had soon made these places passable. About noon we reached Ineyezane, the scene of our engagement when coming up. The grave of those killed was untouched—even the rude cross was still there: this was replaced now by one made in Ekowe, and brought down with us. Our column was so long and cumbersome, that we were ordered to march on Tugela, the relieving column and our corps of "Uhlans" alone proceeding to Ginghilovo. A few Basutos (mounted) were sent with us as scouts. This change in our march was a great disappointment, as, once at Tugela, there was no knowing how long it might be before the doctors would consider us fit to take the field again; but in moving to Ginghilovo there was a chance of the fairly healthy ones "moving on." We bivouacked that night two miles short of the Amata-kulu river, and five miles south-west of Ginghilovo. Close to us was a well-trodden circle, where the army of Dabulamanzi had danced and

shouted, the evening previous to their attacking Lord Chelmsford. The hills above it were literally *seamed* with the tracks they had made in coming to the place of assembly. In a bush close by was found the dead body of a Zulu, with three Martini-bullet woundsthrough his body: he must have marched five miles with these wounds before they killed him,—would he have gone so far with three Snider-Enfield wounds? It was a beautiful moonlight night, and some of us rode over to see the famous laager at Ginghilovo. The stench along the road and round about it from dead Zulus was horrible, and we were all very glad to get back to our fresh camp.

On the 6th we moved on at 7 A.M., burying, before we left, two poor soldiers, who were found in a hospital waggon in the morning, locked dead in each other's arms,—two more sick soldiers lying at the time in the fore part of the waggon. It took us a long time to get the waggons over the Amatakulu river, the water being deeper than when we came up, and we had no native allies to assist the waggons. By noon the head of the column reached the Umsindusi river (seven miles), and bivouacking there till 5 P.M., crossed it, and marched on another ten miles, halting four miles

short of Tugela. The rear-guard, composed of 150 men Naval Brigade, did not arrive there till three o'clock on the morning of the 7th, the waggons having taken so long in getting across the river, and the oxen being done up with the length of the march and the want of food. No Zulus had been seen on the way, but it was reported that there was an army watching us the whole march down. They were probably deterred from attacking by our proximity to Lord Chelmsford's column, where so many horse could come to our assistance if necessary. We marched into Tugela at 11 A.M. on the 7th April, receiving hearty congratulations on our deliverance from "exile vile," from the garrison there.

We had buried 4 officers and 27 men at Ekowe. Our sick, officers and men, numbering about 200, were taken at once across to the hospital on the other side of the river. Captain Wynne, Royal Engineers, died a few days afterwards, and our assistant transport officer, Lieutenant Thirkill, died shortly after, from fever and exposure to the sun. He was a great loss to the service. The column encamped on the Zulu side of the river, where we will now wish them "good-bye," looking forward to another march into Zululand shortly.

REATA; OR, WHAT'S IN A NAME.—PART IV.

CHAPTER XIII.—THE BONY ONE.

"She said, 'Not so: but I will know
If there be any faith in man.'"
—TENNYSON.

THE consequences of that ride were not at an end with Otto's declaration of love and the loss of the "Bony One," for the very next morning Piotr, on entering his master's room, was frightened out of his senses by finding him in a state of high fever, after having passed a miserable night. Otto's constitution, never particularly robust, had suffered from the violent change of climate he had undergone and the intense Mexican heat. The last night's wetting was only the excuse for an attack of fever, which would probably have come sooner or later, and Otto was doomed to a fortnight's severe illness.

Never before had he fretted and fumed as he did now: if at other times a bad patient, he became now an almost unmanageable one. That this should come just at present—just in time to spoil the last weeks of his stay, which he had pictured to himself as containing so much joy, so many happy hours passed in the company of his betrothed,—this thought stung him like an irony of Fate.

There was also another thought which rankled in his mind, and added fuel to his impatience. He had counted on the opportunities of this fortnight for putting the question of his interests in the most becoming light before his aunt's eyes,—a delicate matter, and which required careful handling. Hitherto not a word about money or business had been said to him; but he doubted not that it would come,

and although wondering a little at the continued silence, he was in general too good a politician to let his own eagerness hurry him on to imprudence. This fortnight must surely bring out something; he would be careful, and shape his course by circumstances.

For these two causes he struggled against his illness as long as he could, trying to convince everybody and himself that it was no more than a passing indisposition; but it did not prove to be so. The wet weather which had set in, aggravated many of the symptoms, and the nearest medical advice had to be sent for in haste.

Piotr never left his master's side; and, viewed as a watch-dog, was admirable, but regarded in the light of an intelligent and useful being, decidedly a failure. If he attempted to drop out a dose, he was sure to spill the contents; if Otto required him to hand something from the table, he would send all the medicine-bottles flying in his precipitation; or if the blind had to be drawn up or down, or the shutters closed, he would go at it with such headlong hurry as to come in noisy contact with every intervening piece of furniture.

All this is trying to an invalid, and was particularly so to Otto's nervous irritability. After Piotr had once nearly fractured his master's ankle by dropping on it a hot bottle; on another occasion had startled him by pursuing and demolishing a black-beetle with a thermometer (the thermometer suf-

fering more than the beetle); and on a third, had awoke Otto by praying in a loud voice for his recovery,—Doctor X—— made a stand, and banished the faithful domestic from the sick-room.

The old lady trotted about the house all day in her fussy anxiety, and dropped her cashmere shawl—which by some miraculous chance had escaped tolerably unhurt from the perils of the ride—more frequently than usual. She would also have trotted in and out of Otto's room if the doctor had not again made a stand, declaring that his patient needed quiet more than anything, and restricting her to two or three visits a-day.

Reata also walked about the house more than was her habit, and most during the days when Otto's case was the gravest. She could not go to her beloved forest in the rain, so she spent her time indoors, in idle unrest, doing nothing, wandering from room to room, or scrawling down entries into her diary; or for hours together she would pace the veranda, with hands unoccupied, but her mind busied with many thoughts, while Fícha sat and looked on in amazement at this new state of affairs.

That evening, in the hurry before reaching home, Otto had made her promise to keep the secret, and she had given him her word to be silent for a week at any rate, and by that time more would be settled than was now.

When he pressed her on the point, she had looked for a minute distressed, as if not knowing what answer to make.

"Let me think a moment," she had said, "and I will tell you whether I can or not."

"But surely, my darling," he had replied, "you will not refuse me this trifle, the first thing I ask of you?"

There were reasons against the plan of secrecy—more reasons than Otto knew of—but she was too happy to refuse him anything; and so, after a pause, just as they reached home, she had said, hurriedly, "Well, Otto, if you like, I shall keep silent for a week."

If the old lady had not been mentally so shortsighted she could not have failed to perceive that something was wrong with Reata now. She wondered a little at the girl's sudden restlessness of demeanour, her loss of appetite, and neglect of favourite occupations; but the good creature herself was in such a continual state of flurry and unnecessary bustle, and had her thoughts so taken up with the invalid, that the change did not strike as it might at another time; and if once or twice her attention was aroused by the excitable manner in which Reata was walking up and down the veranda, she put it down to the unusual confinement and want of exercise entailed by bad weather.

In the alarm of Otto's sudden illness, nobody thought of taking any steps towards tracing the horse-stealer and recovering Don Ramirez. Late that night Ortega had returned, he and his horse fagged to death, and of course unsuccessful in their pursuit. He had been close upon the horse-stealer at one time,—so close that he could hear him showering volleys of horribly ingenious oaths upon the beautiful mare that had escaped and the gaunt chestnut that remained as the only fruit of his pains.

At last the day came when Otto was pronounced fit to have his first taste of fresh air again. The weather had cleared up partially, although not yet for good; and this being the first sunshiny afternoon—not the hot sunshine of a fortnight ago, but a bright pleasant warmth, as if the sun had emerged cool and refreshed

from a long shower-bath—it was decided that the patient should spend an hour on the veranda, as a first trial of his strength.

Otto looked forward to the hour as one would who knows he is to see again what he loves most, and has been parted from for a time ; and when he held her hand again, and saw her face of tender anxiety, he felt almost inclined to forgive Fate for the separation, so sweet was the joy of meeting.

"How I have longed for this moment, my darling!" said Otto, holding her hand in his, and, aunt Olivia being safely indoors, kissing it every moment. "Now tell me, dearest, did you think of me always? Were you sorry? Did you miss me?"

All of which questions were answered satisfactorily.

The drift of the conversation on the veranda may be gathered from the fact that when, after his brief span of freedom, Otto was ordered back to his room, Reata, remaining outside, knelt down on the stone floor, and pulling Fícha on to her lap, turned one of her fluffy ears inside out and whispered into it, "If you only knew how happy I am, White Puppy! Is he not charming and handsome? And he loves me so, and I love him too," she continued, more softly—"much more than you. It is so good and noble of him to love a poor penniless girl; do you hear that, Fícha?" and Reata put her head down on to Fícha's soft back. "But, remember, you must be a discreet Camel, and not betray a word to the Giraffe about it yet. It is a secret—a great secret. You and I know a great many secrets, don't we, Blossom? But everything is so delightful that I want nothing changed."

Two days after, Otto was roused from his morning slumbers by the

sound of wheels outside; and in hastily pulling aside the blind, and squeezing his head into a corner of the window, he just caught a glimpse of the yellow gig driving away. On questioning Piotr, he heard that a gentleman had come to the house while the Herr Oberlieutenant was sound asleep—not the same gentleman who had been here once before, but an old grey-haired one. He had talked with the ladies in the breakfast-room for some time, and had now taken his departure.

This occurrence gave a new turn to Otto's thoughts, which for the last two days had been centred entirely, and to the exclusion of everything else, on his newly-created happiness. "My time is short," he said to himself reprovingly, "and I must not allow my love to overpower all practical advantages; it would not be fair to Reata."

That same afternoon they sat on the veranda again, as they had done on the first day of his convalescence.

"You are strong enough to read letters, are you not?" asked Reata. "Here is one that came two days ago; I did not dare to give it you before."

The letter was from Langenfeld, and Otto's face clouded as he perused it.

"Do you know the feeling, darling, of having an enemy?—a man whom you hate and who hates you?" he asked, as he refolded the paper.

"No," she answered, almost startled by the abrupt question. "How can anybody hate you?" Is the letter from him? I am so sorry I gave it you."

"No, but there is something about him."

"Why do you hate him, Otto?" She fixed her eyes with grave inquiry on his face.

"That man once took away from me something that I wanted," he said, evading her look.

"Something that you wanted? Do you want it still?"

"No, I do not." And he looked back at her, with a smile beginning to chase away the cloud.

"Then why hate him still?"

"You cannot understand, darling, and may you never understand, the depth of the hatred between us. Do you know, Reata,"—and Otto raised himself a little from his leaning posture—"I would give up everything I possess—everything except you, my darling—if by that I could take from him all that he holds dear!"

"How horrible, Otto!" said Reata, shuddering; "don't talk like that; I am afraid of you."

"Afraid of me, my love?" he repeated, recovering his calmness, and leaning back. "You need never be afraid of me. I feel like a different man when I am near you; you can make of me what you please." He stretched his hand towards her with a loving gesture. His loose linen coat-sleeve was brushed up in the act; his wrist became bare, and showed a deep purple scar.

"Oh, Otto, what is that? have you hurt yourself?" she asked, with sudden alarm in her eyes and voice.

"Yes, I hurt myself—but it was a long time ago; and it was *he* who did it—the man I have been telling you of."

"What! he tried to kill you?" she faltered, pale with nervous excitement.

"Not exactly; we fought, and I came off worst."

"Poor Otto!" was all she could say, and she looked up into his eyes with a tender hero-worship that made her seem more lovely almost than he had seen her yet.

"My only treasure!" he murmured, returning to a more congenial subject, and pursuing it from this point with his wonted eloquence. But this time Otto, in the midst of his love-making, and all in talking that sweet senseless talk which is Paradise to the two concerned, however uninteresting to every one else, kept steadily in view the point he was aiming at, not letting the pleasures of the moment entirely drown the solid advantages of the future.

"Only one week more with you," he said, sighing heavily; "and to think of the two that I have lost by that confounded fever! How shall I be able to live without you, even only a few months? It will not be longer than a few months, will it, dearest? My aunt will be able to spare you then?"

"Yes, I think so," she answered, a little absently. Otto noticed that her manner had a shade of preoccupation in it to-day; and her colour came and went even more rapidly than usual.

"There are so many things we ought to talk over: I feel sometimes as if I had known you all my life, and then again I think that I do not know you at all. You must feel the same thing about me: perhaps you know still less of me than I do of you?"

"Oh no, not that, darling," he said, smiling at her; "I think I know my own Reata as well as myself. You don't know how clear and transparent you are; I can read every thought. You never would be able to conceal anything from me."

She gave a little uneasy laugh. "Not quite as transparent as that, Otto; you know that at this moment I am keeping a secret from the Giraffe; so that shows that I can keep a secret when I choose. But, Otto, won't you

let me tell her! everything would be so much simpler then," and Reata sighed wearily.

"Not yet, my love," he said, passing his fingers caressingly over her hand. "You will wait a little longer if I ask you, will you not? Not very long, only a few days. Perhaps the very day of my departure will be the best, the most favourable." He was talking now more to himself than to her. "You cannot find it, so hard to keep a secret to please me?" and Otto's deep blue eyes, shaded with those dark lashes, were turned on Reata with coaxing entreaty.

"I would do a great deal more to please you, Otto; but I do hope it is the last secret I need have from the Giraffe. I think secrets are very troublesome things"—and she looked at Otto half wistfully, and then was silent for a minute.

During that minute Otto was preparing to make the first step towards solid advantages. Reata was ready to do anything to please him, and he was convinced of it; so why should he not make use of this in order to settle that troublesome business about those three thousand florins? He was thinking how most skilfully to open the subject, when Reata said in a low voice, and without looking towards him, "I want to tell you something, Otto."

It happened that at that particular moment he was busied in lighting a cigar, or he could not have helped perceiving her evident nervousness: she looked as if struggling up to an effort.

"Tell me anything you like, darling," he said, absently, flinging away the match, with his thoughts still running on the best way of broaching that tiresome subject.

She turned her flushed face towards him, and was opening her lips to speak, but before she had

said a syllable, there came an interruption—a violent interruption—in the shape of the old lady, Piotr, and Ortega, all coming out of the house with a rush, and all talking together. Ortega was purple in the face, and gasping with excitement, giving out in broken accents something about horse-stealers and Don Ramirez.

"What's up next?" inquired Otto, raising himself upright, and looking with bewilderment on the three agitated countenances.

"I think he says that most of the other horses are stolen too," said aunt Olivia, sinking on to a chair and covering her face with her hands.

Piotr, who had followed the others, not understanding even the drift of the excitement, but imagining that some sort of outrage was going to be done to Otto, stood by on one leg, breathing very hard, partly from having run so fast, and partly from agitation; ready to defend his master to the last breath.

"What has happened?" asked Reata sternly of the boy.

"The horse!" he gasped out.

"What horse, and what is the matter with it?"

There was nothing the matter, it turned out, only that two minutes before, when Ortega was occupied in rubbing down Tabaco's coat, he had heard a loud neigh outside the paddock, and there was Don Ramirez, gaunter and more bony than ever, standing in wait of admittance. "Where he came from, I don't know," explained Ortega. "I never saw nor heard him till he stood by the paddock with his head resting on the top bar of the gate. There was nothing about him but a piece of broken cord on one of his fore-legs, and his bones are standing out all over his body, as if they would come through the skin."

"Poor 'Bony One,' I must go

and see him at once," said Reata, springing up—"that is to say, I will come later," she corrected herself, remembering that Otto could not walk as far. "See that he gets plenty of food."

"He began eating as soon as he saw the oats, and I don't think he will stop to-night," said Ortega, and then he retired; and Piotr, having gathered from the gestures of the speakers that nothing was going to be done to his master, retired also.

When they were left to themselves again, Otto was determined to make for his point at once, without risking further interruption; so almost immediately he began—

"I have an important thing to say to you, my dearest—a sort of confession, in fact, to make. Will you listen to me now?"

"I am sure it is not bad; you could not do anything very bad, Otto," answered Reata confidently, mentally postponing what she on her side had to say until he should have relieved his mind from whatever it was that at that moment disturbed it. And then, with certain preliminaries, Otto put the state of the case before her, disposing it in as graceful and becoming a light as it would admit of. His task was not hard, and was crowned with unexpected success. Reata was confident of aunt Olivia's willingness and ability to put all straight, and did not doubt her own influence.

"There is such a weight off my mind!" he said gaily, having exhausted every imaginable expression of gratitude. "It was my last chance—otherwise I should have had to leave the army, and that would be a pity, I think," he added, in an aggrieved tone.

"Oh no, you must not leave the army," she exclaimed, eagerly. "I think the cavalry profession the finest in the world, and you must

look so well in your uniform. I wish I could see you in it!"

"What an enthusiast you are, my darling!"—and Otto smiled, as he thought how different the reality was from the ideal. "I begin to suspect that you must have had a hand in that P. S. of my aunt's letter."

"Perhaps I had," said Reata, colouring up. "You know the dear old Giraffe is so limp about writing, and I have always to help her. She could never manage a letter by herself."

"Do you know, it was principally on account of those wretched debts that I came here at all? little thinking what a treasure I should find!" and here he again had the imprudence to kiss her hand. "It had been all settled that Arnold was to go; but I asked him to give up his place to me, and he did so."

"Did he? How generous!" she exclaimed, with sparkling eyes.

"Oh, ah—yes," said Otto, with the air of a man to whom an idea has been presented in quite a new light. "Arnold is a good enough fellow in his way; but, of course, it is only natural that he should want to help me in a strait like this."

"Tell me more about your brother, and about your family. I want to hear everything. I am sure I shall like them all so much," and Reata drew her chair a little nearer, and prepared to listen with interest.

"I so much prefer talking about ourselves just at present," he said, leaning back, and looking up into her eyes.

"Nonsense!" was the reply; "we talk about ourselves quite enough, and I want to hear all about your family. You hardly ever mention them. Now begin with your brother. What is he like?"

"Rather like me, I believe," returned Otto, languidly.

"Then I am sure I shall like him," interrupted Reata.

"Only he is darker; not quite dark, you know, but just brown. He has got good enough features—a little heavy, perhaps; and those heavy-featured men have rarely got much variety of expression—don't you think so, my pet?" asked Otto, passing his hand lightly over his smooth-shaved chin, comfortable in the consciousness that his own features, now no longer ignominiously "planted-out," could well bear her scrutiny.

"Is he as tall as you are?" she next asked.

"Yes, quite as tall—taller, in fact, and ever so much broader; quite a different build, more suited to cuirassiers or heavy dragoons than to my sort of service."

"And is he like you in other ways? Does he talk as much?"

"Well, no," said Otto, rousing himself to the further discussion of this uninteresting topic—"that is to say, not with ladies. He sometimes will talk for hours on end with men, upon military, political, or agricultural subjects. I have heard him hold forth for ten consecutive minutes"—and Otto here smiled a little, as if at an amusing recollection—"against the vice of Liberalism; for Arnold has got some dreadfully antiquated notions on the subject, which would have been more in place a century ago. In ladies' society, however, he is like a stick, and never manages to be a favourite. Of course," added the speaker, reflectively, "that is not his fault; it is entirely a thing of knack, and every one has not got it."

"But perhaps, if he tried, he could manage to get on with ladies," suggested Reata. "I also thought that I could not speak to men, until I knew you. At any rate, he will

have to speak to me—for, after all, he will be my own brother."

"Even you will not find that such an easy task, dearest," said Otto, frowning ever so slightly as he spoke. This great interest in his brother was not quite to his taste. Then he said spontaneously: "Arnold is going to marry soon."

"Is he? Then he must talk to ladies sometimes."

"This is quite a different thing; he has been intimate with Hermine Schwerendorf ever since we were all children together. She is the only person who could ever have suited him."

"Is he fond of her?" asked Reata, with startling simplicity—"as fond as you are of me?"

"Not that, I swear!" said Otto, with a look which made her lower her eyes quickly; "but that is only because it is not in his nature. He is not the sort of man for it; but he likes Hermine more than he could care for anybody else. She is a quiet, gentle creature, with hair as yellow as that sugar-cane over there; exactly the reverse of you, my beautiful love, and exactly the sort of woman to suit Arnold."

"When are they going to be married?"

"Oh, I don't know," was the somewhat evasive answer; "there is no time settled yet; but it won't be long, I am sure. There can be no reason for their waiting," he went on, after a pause, as if following up a train of thought. "Hermine will have a handsome *dot*, and they will be well enough off." Something like the ghost of a sigh came at the end of Otto's phrase; and faint as it was, Reata caught it.

Another pause; and this time she was pursuing a separate train of thought. In a minute she said timidly, and with her head averted, "I suppose we shall be very ill off, Otto?"

"I am afraid so, my darling," was the reply; "we certainly shall be very poor, unless I can persuade my aunt to do something for us." There was almost some grimness in his tone as he spoke.

Reata had risen, and was leaning over the wooden balustrade, looking out on to the glimpse of plain beyond, where the fresh new grass was beginning to spread its green cloak over the faded verdure of a fortnight ago.

Her perceptions were intensely keen, and she had turned away, that he should not see her face. Suddenly, without looking round, she asked—

"Tell me, Otto, would you be happier if we were rich?"

Her tone sounded indifferent; but could he have seen her look of intense anxiety as she spoke, he would have been more cautious in replying. As it was, he saw nothing, and answered unguardedly—

"Of course I should, my darling—much happier. Money is everything in this world," he continued, equally unconscious of the look of painful disappointment which had crossed her face, and speaking with that eagerness of manner which betrays more than it means to do.

"Money would never have anything to do with my happiness," she said, speaking slowly, as if repeating a lesson—"unless, indeed, the want of it entailed a separation from those I loved."

"Of course, my angel," said Otto, hastily recovering himself—"that is what I meant; but you have got so little experience in all these matters, and have not learnt to give them their proper value. You do not realise what a difference money would make in your and my life. It would be dreadful to me to see you enduring privation of any kind. I should like to surround my darling with

everything that is beautiful and precious; give her every luxury that love can devise or money procure, and make her life like a long, brilliant fairy-tale."

But even this gorgeous description failed to call back the smile which had fled from Reata's lips. She remained immovable in her leaning posture,—that same grave look on her face, and a thought slowly ripening in her mind.

"But you would not love me the less because I have not got bright and beautiful surroundings?" There was something in her voice which roused Otto's attention.

"Reata!" he said, rising and going up to her.

She had put one hand over her face; he drew it away,—and then she turned quickly towards him, and laying both her hands on his arms, said passionately: "I must be loved for myself alone, Otto; no other love will do for me."

"But, dearest—" he interrupted, in surprise.

"You must love me *only* for myself," she went on, in the same way; "that is what I need, what I yearn for." Her eyes were fixed on his, with an intensity of inquiry which seemed as if it would read his soul. "I would not love you a bit better if you were a king. I should be content to beg my bread round the world with you, if only I knew that you love me as I want to be loved. If I ever thought that you could, for a second, regret, I would not have you, Otto." She tried to finish playfully; but the tears trembling in her eyes belied her.

"Do I not love you for yourself alone?" he asked; and amidst the emotion which made him pale, there was a tone of tender reproach.

With all her soft affection, there was something in this girl which he did not understand,—a vein of

wild untamed romance, which in a character like hers might lead to strange results—a capacity hardly yet awakened, which he had guessed at in her childish fancies, and which he now read in her eyes.

"Yes, you know I am only a poor girl," she said, looking up at him, and speaking eagerly, as if to silence her own doubts. "That is what makes me prize your love all the more."

"Have I not shown you," said Otto, bending over her, and holding her tightly strained towards him, "by asking you to be my own, that I value your own sweet self more than any fortune which another woman might bring me?" He paused for one second, and then went on: "To be quite frank, darling—before I saw you, I, like many other men, thought that I could only marry for the sake of bettering my position; but you have conquered everything beside you, and taught me that there is nothing worth living for but Love,"—and so strong is the force of passion while it lasts, that Otto's own words convinced himself.

"How can you still doubt me after this, my own beloved?"

By this time Reata was beginning to feel ashamed of her foolish outbreak.

"It is so wrong of me to excite you at present, after your illness," she said, stealing her hand into his. "I don't know how it all began. I have got odd ideas at times, and you will have to get accustomed to them. Ah, you have no notion what a troublesome bargain you have got on your hands!"

"By the by," said Otto, with a sudden recollection, "did you not say a little while ago that you had something to tell me? I was thinking of other things at the moment; but surely you said that?"

"Oh no, it is nothing. I have

changed my mind," she said, drawing herself up a little, and speaking quietly, but with decision. "Never mind about it, and don't ask me. I cannot tell you now, but I will some day."

He had not attached much importance to the matter at the moment, and he did not now; neither did he want to press her, and possibly disturb her mind again. Although, in returning to his room, he wondered a little what it was, and why she had suddenly changed her mind, it was soon dismissed from his thoughts as one of his beloved Reata's strange fancies.

Perhaps he gave the less attention to it because just then there was another subject pressing on his mind.

"So that hound is making the best of my absence," he said, drawing out Langenfeld's letter again and regarding it grimly. "I dare say he thinks himself quite sure of Halka as long as my back is turned. What would he say if he knew that I am no longer a candidate for her hand? Will I ever get him to believe that I withdraw from free choice? What a fool he will think me for my pains!" And Otto stuffed back the paper impatiently into his pocket, and passed his hand quickly across his eyes, as if to chase away some stinging thought.

Meanwhile Reata stepped off the veranda, and walked as far as the beginning of the forest, where she sat down under the first tree, and, with her hands clasped round her knees, thought deeply.

They were not altogether joyful thoughts; for although she smiled now and then, she frowned as often, throwing back her head, as if with some hidden thought of pride.

She quite forgot to visit Don Ramirez; and there were no confidences whispered into Fícha's ear to-night.

CHAPTER XIV.—UNCLE MAX'S REVENGE.

"Let's choose executors and talk of wills."

—Richard II.

Nothing in this life is ever exactly like what we expected: it may be better, or it may be worse, but the details of the picture in our minds never are quite fulfilled. Whether it be a person or place we expect to see, a painting we are going to view, a conversation of which we have chalked out all the details, or any event which we know impending, and of which we fancy that we know every circumstance—the reality will most certainly be widely different from the idea. The greater the power of imagination, the more prone you will be to go far astray from the mark. The moment that anything is placed in prospect, your fancy seizes on it, and will paint you pictures gorgeous or dismal, golden or black, according to the state of mind you happen to be in—until, when you stand before the thing itself, you hardly recognise it for the same. Many of the touches you had endowed it with will be wanting; and instead, there will be other touches you could not foresee, and which alter the character, and make it into another thing.

You are to meet again a friend whom you have not seen for a time—an old friend who has been your schoolfellow, and whom you love as a brother. You will picture to yourself the meeting; you see how he will clasp your hand, how he will look at you, what he will say, and what you will answer. You will have given a form to the very surroundings of the moment, and, unconsciously perhaps, have decided on the look of the pier or platform where the meeting will be. The moment comes,—and every-

thing is different. His first words are not joyful, as you had thought they would be, but grave; and the sun does not shine as it did in your picture, but the day is dull and colourless.

And look how this holds good in the smallest trivialities of life. You have ordered your dinner at an hotel. Let us suppose that you are a *gourmand*; your imagination will, unknown to your better self, immediately begin working out the details of the dish that is coming. And even granted that you are not a *gourmand*, but simply a hungry mortal, you will instinctively form an idea of what the dish will be like. I will not suppose that you have ordered anything as complicated in name and shape as "*grena-dins de thon en matelote*," or "*épi-gramme de bécasse à la Périgord*." These are not fair examples; for how can any inexperienced person, ungifted with the power of second-sight, form anything like a correct conjecture of what might be the shape and colour of those curiously-baptised dishes? No, let it be nothing more intricate than a beef-steak *garni*; and yet, when it is placed before your hungering eyes, you will at once feel aware that it is different from your expectation. Perhaps it is thicker or thinner cut than you had thought; perhaps it is more under or more over done. Possibly the change comes only from surrounding circumstances: you had fancied the dish white, and it is blue; you had hoped for a garnishing of green peas, and there is only spinage.

Otto had now only two days in Mexico remaining, and as he

thought over the five weeks of his visit, he acknowledged to himself that it had all been very different from his expectations. Here also there were many unforeseen touches in the picture; and one in particular, which had given it a strange, beautiful colouring, he never had dreamt of—for certainly in starting to see his aunt, he little thought that in a few short weeks he should return home an engaged man. He had come in quest of a fortune, and had found a bride—and such a peerless bride!

But also there were many things amissing in the picture. Those hopes and sanguine expectations, which Arnold had called castles in the air, seemed, indeed, to have been built on no more solid foundation. In spite of his knack of getting round people, and of ingratiating himself in their favour—in spite of the warm welcome he had received, and the friendly manner in which from the first day he had been made to feel himself at home—he had not got any further; and here he was, at the very eve of his departure, forced to confess to himself, with considerable mortification, that he was no wiser as to his aunt's fortune and her intentions towards her relations, than he had been before he came.

In her letters there had been, to Otto's eyes at least, a glimmering of hopes held out; but as yet these had come to nothing. Since his arrival here, not a word of the sort had been spoken, nor any reference made to the hints then thrown out. The only point he had gained—and this, as we know, through Reata's influence—was the settling of his debt. Everything had been made square about that, and with apparently very little difficulty.

Yet he felt disappointed; and

had it not been for the diversion which Love had created for him, he would have felt more provoked still. It was only now, on the verge of departure, that he fully realised the situation in all its bearings. One thing was strange—Maximilian Bodenbach had hardly ever been spoken of; Otto had only once or twice heard his name mentioned, and it was with a caution which he could not account for.

His engagement was still secret. He had no fixed plan for the announcement; certainly it should not be until the last moment. Perhaps he would do it by writing, or perhaps he would leave it to be done by Reata.

Yes, it had been a strange time, those five weeks in Mexico, spent so quietly in that long low house which overlooked the plateau. That forest close at hand, with all its tropical beauties—which Reata, on the morning after his arrival, had described with such glowing colours, and where he had passed so many blissful hours in her society under the palm-trees—was as familiar to him now as the woods near Steinbühl.

The solitude of those weeks had never seemed to him oppressive. It is *façon de parler* to say that you have not seen a soul for ages; but here it would have been no more than truth. Otto had seen several human beings—the inhabitants of S——, namely, and the Mexicans who had given them shelter in the farm; but of people with whom he had exchanged a word beyond Reata, the old lady, and his servant, there was absolutely nobody but Emanuel Fadenhecht and Doctor X——, of whom Otto had formed only a very hazy notion during the forty-eight hours that he had stayed in the house.

It was like a piece out of an-

other life, so different did it appear to what went before, and to what he knew must follow. Still there was a golden thread which would connect these weeks with the future. There was Reata, his beautiful Reata, whom he had won for his own, and who would evermore belong to his life.

That evening, the last but one before his departure, Otto, who had still to cultivate invalid habits, went to his room immediately after supper. It had been an unusually silent meal to-day. Reata, who for some days past seemed to have taken a pensive turn, was decidedly abstracted. She looked anxious too, and excited. Once or twice Otto met her eyes fixed on him with a look of inquiry, almost in the way he had surprised her looking at him on the evening of his arrival. His aunt, on her part, said something about a headache, which accounted for her strangely disturbed manner and the way her hand shook in helping herself to sugar. She sat sipping her tea with a general air of misery and depression, and cast imploring glances across the table at Reata.

Otto's spirits being at a low enough ebb already with the prospect of departure, sank to a desperate level, and after a few vain attempts at conversation, he resigned himself to the general silence which seemed to-day inevitable.

"See that you begin packing my things to-morrow," he said to Piotr, when back in his room. "I know you will take twenty-four hours for it, and I am not going to touch an atom myself. Do you hear?"

"Oh yes, Herr Oberlieutenant, I hear."

The alert and cheerful way in which Piotr spoke contrasted strong-

ly with Otto's dismal tone. But then Piotr was not in love, nor going to part from the beloved object.

"I don't see why you should be in such mighty good-humour about going home," said his master, rather snappishly. "I am sure you have had less to do here, and more to eat, than you have ever had in your life before. Wait till we are back at Rzeszów again, and see how you like returning to your rations, and to cleaning my muddy riding-boots twice a-day!"

"Oh, Herr Oberlieutenant, I will clean your boots six times a-day, and never eat anything but *kasza*!"* exclaimed the honest fellow, with tears in his eyes. "If only we are back in our country, where I can speak to people, and people can speak to me!"

"Rubbish!" muttered Otto, with the wisdom of one who has not been condemned to four weeks' perpetual silence.

"I tried at first to speak to that young boy who is with the horses," continued Piotr, warming with his subject, and beginning to balance about the room in an aimless fashion, vaguely dusting everything he came across; "but I could not get him to understand a single thing I meant; and the other stable-men are no better; nor the coachman, nor the woman-servant either."

"Look out there!" roared Otto, as Piotr's vigorous industry nearly brought down the lamp. "What the dickens are you doing with that duster on the lamp-shade? And don't talk such infernal nonsense. How can you expect them to understand you? Do you imagine that every one talks your barbarous tongue?"

"No, it is not that," replied

* A small grain, which forms the chief nourishment of the Polish peasants.

Piotr, mildly putting up with the opprobrious epithet thrown on the language of his adored country, transferring at the same time his attentions from the lamp-shade to the water-jug. "If there had been only one, I should not have wondered. But six of them! and all six together not being able to say a sensible word, nor to understand a word I say; and when I spoke so loud, too!"

Otto's bad humour began to give way to amusement as Piotr proceeded to enumerate and expatiate upon the charms of his native country. To see oak-trees and privet-hedges, sheepskin-coats and greasy Jews, to taste beetroot-soup and walk in mud again, seemed to this true patriot the summit of felicity.

"The mud here is not worthy of the name," he said, disdainfully. "If we had had this much rain at home, there would have been something to show for it; but here it dries up at once. That is not what I call mud."

"I wish I was never to set eyes again upon what you call mud, nor foot in it," Otto began, and then broke off, for there was a knock at the door. "It will be my medicine; go and get it."

It was the medicine, but not the medicine alone, for on the tray beside the bottle lay a long narrow packet, done up in blue paper, sealed with the Bodenbach arms, and bearing Otto's name in the corner.

Otto's hand trembled a little as he took it off the tray, and before he had opened the cover he felt a foreshadowing of what was coming. He had reached an important moment, and much depended on what that blue paper contained.

All sorts of wild ideas shot through his brain during that minute,—his aunt had settled half a

million on him, and had chosen this means of conveying the intelligence; or she had found out his engagement to Reata, and was going to withdraw her countenance from him, perhaps order him out of the house instantly; or else she was sending a handsome present as a farewell gift, a neat packet of bank-notes, only the shape didn't look like that.

"I won't require you any more to-night, Piotr," he said, sitting up in his chair with the packet in his hand; "get away to bed."

"But, Herr Oberlieutenant, I must take off your boots," said Piotr, unable to reconcile himself to anything abnormal.

"My boots be hanged!" Otto said, impatiently; "I want to be alone; get away."

"But please, Herr Oberlieutenant," persisted Piotr, eyeing his master's *chaussure*, as if meditating a sudden rush at his legs.

"I'll take them off myself; do you hear?"

Piotr's expression was incredulous; but seeing that Otto's temper was about to give way, he left the room unwillingly, throwing a long-ing glance at the boots, and giving a parting touch with the duster to the portmanteau as he passed.

The moment he was alone, Otto got up and locked the door, and then tore off the blue cover of the packet. The first glance showed him the fallacy of the bank-note theory.

There were three papers in the packet: one was a short letter on note-paper; the second was a cheque to the amount of 2000 florins; and the third, a thick white paper folded lengthways down the middle, was endorsed on the outer sheet as: A Copy of the Will of Maximilian, Baron of Bodenbach.

He read the note first; it was short:—

"MY DEAR NEPHEW,—You receive enclosed a copy of your uncle Maximilian's will, which I have had made out for you, and which I wish you to keep. For the sake of greater clearness, I have had all the sums referred to named in Austrian money. This will be more intelligible to you than the national coin, which figured in the original document.

"When you have perused the contents of the will, you will understand that, even did I wish, I am placed out of the position of altering its conditions.

"The enclosed will, I hope, cover your journey expenses.—With great affection, your aunt,

"OLIVIA BODENBACH."

Otto had of course speculated upon his uncle Max's will, but of late rather less ; and now that he held it in his hand, written out in fair characters, he knew that here was the heart of the thing, the fulfilment or the destruction of his sanguine hopes, the tug of war which had to be got over.

Conditions ! His aunt spoke of unalterable conditions. "I dare-say I won't find them too hard," said Otto to himself ; but he felt too anxious to smile, as he would have wished to do, by way of further self-encouragement.

The paper was stiff and new, and would not let itself be folded out smoothly without a little trouble. There was no trouble in the reading,—every word, every letter, was traced with even distinctness ; the pen had been sharp, and the ink of a wholesome black.

"*This is the last will and testament of Maximilian, Baron of Bodenbach, known in this country of Mexico under the name of Maximilian Boden.*

"*I, Maximilian Bodenbach, being*

at this time in possession of my right mind, have resolved to appoint the division of my worldly possessions in such manner as I think most fit for promoting the welfare and honour of the family of Bodenbach, whose name I am proud to claim as my birthright—it being in great measure with view to the untarnished honour which for centuries has rested on the said name that I found it advisable to curtail and change the same to that of Boden while residing in this country, as I deemed it my duty not to let the name of Bodenbach be used in connection with mercantile pursuits. My fortune, which at this time being I value at two million florins, and which, being withdrawn from trade and placed in investment, will, under Providence, have remained unchanged at the time of my death, I dispose of in the manner following : One million and a half, together with all my houses, estates, and effects both real and personal, whatsoever and wheresoever, and of what nature and quality soever, I hereby devise and bequeath (subject, however, to certain burdens and conditions to be named presently) in first place to my only child and daughter, Olivia, Baroness of Bodenbach, for her absolute and sole enjoyment during the term of her life, to be disposed of in case of her death without natural heirs in the manner set forth further on in this document."

The will here proceeded to enumerate the burdens, which were as follows : The payment of six thousand florins, together with the interest and compound interest, to his nephew Walther ; this being the amount of the debt owing to Maximilian's brother Felix, whose generosity had shielded his honour at the time of his flight from Europe, and for whom he professed all the proper amount of gratitude.

Then came a pension of six hundred florins to be paid yearly to Fräulein Lackenegg, his daughter's companion; the capital to belong to her, and leaving her the power to raise it at will.

Otto's face lighted up here. "So my darling Reata is not penniless, after all," he muttered to himself. "This will be some help; almost enough to fork out the caution-money. Why didn't she tell me this the other day? Perhaps she does not know yet."

There were a few more legacies mentioned, and all these were to be discharged within a twelvemonth following on the death.

So far Otto had read standing, with his left hand resting on the table, and with the paper held so that the lamplight from under the china shade streamed full upon it; but now he sat down, for he had not quite regained his usual strength, and the excitement of the moment came wellnigh to overpower him.

There was still half a million to be disposed of; and everything depended upon the *how*.

The will proceeded:—

"The remaining five hundred thousand florins, which is the quarter of my fortune, I dispose of in the following manner, so as to benefit as much as possible my remaining relatives; and first and foremost I desire to benefit the children of my nephew, Walther Bodenbach, should he have any living at the time of my death."

Here Otto jumped up, and waving the paper above his head, shouted out loud, "Hurrah! didn't I say so?"

There is a proverb which says, "Don't holloa till you are out of the wood;" and Otto's exultation came a little prematurely.

The will went on to say, that

out of the sum aforementioned only a hundred and fifty thousand florins were to belong unconditionally to Walther's children, and that, only on their attaining the age of twenty-one years, and not before a twelvemonth after the testator's death.

Then came a long tirade about the evil consequences, which he had seen exemplified in various manners, of allowing young men and women to come to the possession of money too early in life, &c., &c.—the gist of which was, that the interest of the remaining capital of three hundred and fifty thousand florins (the capital itself never to be raised) should be apportioned in equal division to his grand nephews or nieces, from the time when they should attain the age of thirty years in the case of boys, and of twenty-five years in the case of girls; and then, only under the following condition:—

"That each of my possible grand-nephews or grand-nieces, sons or daughters of my nephew Walther Bodenbach, should at the time of his or her attaining the ages as above determined, be unmarried, or have contracted a marriage with a person of noble birth; and by this I do not understand a person raised to the state of nobility, but only a person actually born in the said state. Should any one of my grand-nephews or grand-nieces, subsequent to the attainment of the ages as above determined, contract a marriage with a person not of noble birth, I hereby determine that he or she should, from the date of such a marriage, forfeit his or her proportion of the above-determined interest."

"Humbug!" shouted Otto, flinging down the document on the table. The rage which had been slowly gathering within him during the last sentence had come to a climax

now, and it relieved his feelings to ill-treat the innocent paper. But, after all, he must read the will to the end; and so, having indulged his fit of democratic passion for half a minute, there was nothing for it but to take up the ill-used document and go on with its perusal.

It appeared that in case of such forfeitures, the sums in question were to go to another branch of Bodenbachs, the Bodenbach-Bodenbergs, at the time being settled in the Palatinate, in due order of succession, and always subject to the same condition.

Under pain of forfeiture also, his daughter was bound down not to make over any part of her fortune to any of her relations for the purpose of furthering a marriage which went contrary to the conditions of the will, and she was restricted in her power of assisting her relations by money-gifts during her lifetime.

Evidently the old man had had his object very much at heart, and had been firmly resolved that under no contingency should Walther's children be able to elude the condition, or come to the enjoyment of more than the portion he had set aside for them, for with characteristic cunning he had provided for every possibility. In case of his daughter's death without natural heirs (and this appeared to Otto the most eccentric part of this eccentric will), the whole of her large fortune was, after the lapse of a year from the date of her death, to devolve, not upon any of her relations, but upon the *Adelige Damen-Stift* (chapter founded for ladies of noble birth) near B——, in Austria, which had already counted amongst its members several ladies of the Bodenbach name.

The testator further declared, that whereas he had once reflected on the step of disinheriting his daughter in the event of her ever

contracting an ignoble marriage, on considering the improbability of such an event he had refrained from this course.

"Unnecessary stipulation — old hag," muttered Otto between his teeth.

The will was now approaching its conclusion. After various stipulations and provisions, in which the same ground was travelled over, and which confirmed all the conditions as perfectly binding, admitting of no loophole of escape (his daughter being appointed sole executrix), it wound up in the following pompous terms:—

"The reason for which I have acted in the manner set forth above, with regard to the marriages of my possible grand nephews and nieces, is that I, as a member of an ancient and noble family, consider it my duty, as far as lies in my power, to prevent any mixture of plebeian blood with the noble blood of Bodenbach; and this especially as I am most painfully aware that an unfortunate instance of this sort has taken place in the family within the last thirty years. It is my wish that rather should the name of Bodenbach die out than that it should become contaminated by any further admixture from plebeian sources."

"Although any idea of revenge is far from my mind, I cannot refrain from reminding my nephew Walther Bodenbach, whom I believe to be still living, that if at a certain period of his life he had shown greater strength of character and purpose, he not only would have at this moment occupied towards me the position of a son, but he would have also preserved the blood of our family intact in nobility, and have maintained and promoted the intimate union of the Bodenbach name."

Here followed the winding up

of the will—fully signed and attested.

Having read to the end, Otto again flung down the paper, and remained sitting, leaning with his elbow against the table, his fingers pushed up through his hair in a way which gave to his face a wild look. His brain was in a whirl; he had read the will quickly—not leaving out a word, but hardly for a moment pausing to think—and now naturally he could not at once clearly grasp the situation in all its details.

The expression of profound disgust which his face had worn while he was reading through his grand-uncle's flowery sentences about purity of blood and disinterested intentions, now gave way to one of deep thought. His nerves were so strained with the excitement, that it was some seconds before he was able to disentangle his ideas, and see in what way the circumstances bore directly on himself. The case was simple enough, in truth—his fortune depended on his marriage. Should he marry against his grand-uncle's wishes, he would be reduced to a much smaller portion than the one put aside for him—fifty thousand florins, instead of close upon one hundred and seventy thousand.

For a man who has never known the possession of money, to have a fortune suddenly assured to him, is, or ought to be, a delightful experience; but so insatiable is human nature—or, at least, some human natures—that, having got a small thing, they forget, even despise it, at sight of the larger one that is within their grasp.

Otto never gave a thought to the smaller sum that was unconditionally to be his; he simply disregarded it, for he was dazzled by the other. He took up the document again and looked greedily at the portentous ciphers, as if unable to

take his eyes off them. His fingers grasped the paper tight, as though it were the gold it promised.

"A hundred and seventy thousand florins!" he said out loud. "How rich I shall be!—Reata and I. It is more than I ever dreamt of. My darling! Now I shall be able to make her life like a long fairy-tale! Oh, uncle Max is a trump, in spite of his absurd notions!" he went on, striding up and down the room in that manner which was common to both brothers when excited or preoccupied. He was evidently going on to some stronger expressions on the subject, but suddenly he checked himself violently and came to a dead stand.

It was just before the looking-glass, which reflected his pale, distorted face, and wildly ruffled hair. But it was not this image, striking though it was, that had drawn him up thus in a moment; it was the question which had flashed across his mind, Could it be that Reata was not of noble birth?

To most people—that is to say, to those as strangely ignorant on such a point as Otto was—this question would have presented itself instantaneously with the reading of the will. Certainly, to Otto it would not have failed to come as quickly, had it not been for the very nature and strength of his attachment, which made him regard its object as something quite different, something separate from the rest of the world, as one whom mere social distinctions could not affect. Never had he felt the slightest curiosity about her family. He did not know whether she had a single relation living; and if he had ever given a thought to the subject, it was only to rejoice at her seeming isolation, with no family ties to weaken her entire reliance on him. When he had asked Emanuel Fadenhecht for her name,

it was not because he was anxious to know it, but simply because it seemed to him ridiculous that he should not know it. As to considering whether she was of noble birth or not, the question had, for the above reasons, not occurred to him in a distinct shape ; but if at any moment of the last five weeks he had been asked off-hand whether she were or were not, he would have unhesitatingly answered in the affirmative, merely because such was his general impression. As far as personal views went, he did not put a straw's weight on the matter. It was only now—when, from a business point, the question had protruded itself through the midst of his excited exultation—that for the first time he considered the bare possibility of a negative reply.

Now that he came to think of it, he had no positive reason to suppose that Reata was of noble birth.

After staring for a minute blankly into the glass, frowning terribly at his own reflection, the first cloud of doubt that had come over him passed away.

"How could I be such a fool !" he exclaimed, with a half laugh. "You have only to look at her for the answer. She is a born princess in every movement and action. Of course, somebody was an Indian chief—my aunt told me so ; it was either her father or her mother. I think the mother was—not a chief, of course, but the daughter of one ; but who, in the name of heavens, was her father ? A German, she said. Lackenegg ? An unusual name ! I have hardly ever heard it before ; must be a good one. Lackenegg—Lackenegg," Otto repeated the name over, at least fifty times, with different intonations of voice, and varieties of accentuation and inflection.

"It is all right, I am certain,"

he said, resuming his walk about the room ; but although his tone was hopeful, and his spirit, as a rule, belonged to the sanguine order, yet an hour later he was still pacing his room, looking paler and more excited, having worked himself up into a state of painful suspense. He felt an invincible desire to disturb the quiet house, where the stillness of night now reigned, by rushing out, knocking at his aunt's door, and asking the dreaded question. Would she not think him mad, if he suddenly came to her door in the dead of night to ask whether her companion were of a noble family or not ? She would not know that hanging on to that answer would be another to him of such importance.

"A happy man of course I shall be," he said once or twice ; "with her any man must be happy : but am I to be a rich man or a poor one ?"

No answer came ; and none could come till to-morrow, till he put the plain question and got the plain reply.

He could not go on for ever repeating the name out loud, by way of a test ; so he fell to thinking, and straining his memory, to see if nowhere that name had a place in his experiences or recollections.

"Surely that old fogey of a Baron, whom I met at Baden, was called Lackenegg — Baron Lackenegg ; that will be it. Doesn't sound quite right, though. Confound the old blockhead ! I declare it was Flakenegg. But that is no reason for there not being Baron Lackeneggs."

Following naturally on the agonies of this doubt, came violently abusive thoughts of uncle Max, who was the cause of all this mental anguish. He was no longer a "trump," but a mean, revengeful,

old miser, who had hoarded up his wealth for the express purpose of torturing his relatives in general, and his grand-nephew Otto in particular.

"How that marriage of my father's must have stuck in his throat! No doubt he would have liked to get rid of his precious Olivia. She can't have been a beauty, even in her best days, judging from present looks. As if anybody believed all that trash and twaddle about blood! I dare-say, though, Arnold will admire it

all mightily; just in his line. All very well for *him* with his Her-mine; but I have no patience for it."

Thus Otto spent the hours of the night, passing through the same rounds of argument, doubt, hope, and rage—always travelling in a circle, and coming back to the same point; but not able to put aside the subject, however fruitless its consideration must be.

At last nature took what was not offered, and sent him sound asleep in his chair.

CHAPTER XV.—A LITTLE SOUVENIR.

"I do not like her name."—*As You Like It*.

Otto's last day in Mexico broke dull and cloudy. It had rained again in the night; he had heard the drizzle against the pane, and there was more rain to come.

After dinner Reata proposed a visit to the horse-paddock; and Otto acquiesced readily, seeing here the opportunity he had not yet had of speaking to her alone, and asking the great question. It would be best to ask her, rather than his aunt, he thought, on mature consideration; but of course he would do so skilfully, so as not to excite suspicion. He was ignorant of how much or how little she knew of the contents of the will. Something she must know, he thought; but did she know all?

When first they met that day, a close observer would have seen that each had glanced furtively at the other. In Otto's face there was anxiety and a look of harassment, and in her face there was anxiety too. More prominent than anxiety, though, were the lines of determination which sat almost hardly round her mouth to-day, robbing her face of its softness.

As soon as they were out of the house Reata spoke—

"Didn't you say, the other day, Otto, that your brother Arnold is fond of riding?"

"Yes, he is fond of it," replied Otto, in some wonder at this abrupt commencement; "of course every cavalry officer ought to be. Why do you ask me, my darling?"

"Well, because," she answered, in high embarrassment—"because your aunt was saying this morning—"

"Something about Arnold? Why, what can she want to do to him?"

"She wants—would like to—if he does not mind—to send him a trifle, a little *souvenir*, by you."

"Oh, all right," Otto said carelessly; "I suppose it will go into my portmanteau," thinking of riding-whips and embroidered saddle-cloths.

"No, not quite, I am afraid," she said, half laughing through her embarrassment; "it is too big—it is a horse: Maraquita, in fact—that is to say, if you consider it worth while, and that your brother will care about it."

Otto gave a long whistle, and was silent, out of sheer surprise. "The deuce of a 'little *souvenir*!' " he thought; "fifteen-three high."

"Perhaps it is stupid of me," said Reata, distressed at his silence; "because I—I gave her the idea. You seemed to think Maraquita pretty the other day, and you also said that in your country it is difficult to get good horses; and I thought that perhaps your brother——"

"Of course, my own darling," he interrupted, enthusiastically; "you were quite right; it is only you who could have such a capital idea. Arnold is a lucky fellow, by Jove!"

"And do you really think he will like her?"

"Like her! Arnold would need to be a greater fool than I take him for, if he does not. I don't think our stables at Steinbühl have had the honour of roofing such an animal for the last twenty-five years."

Otto pushed open the wooden gate of the paddock, which they had now reached, and they stood on the wet grass, near the entrance, looking round among the horses for the one they were in quest of. There she was, Maraquita, at the far end, close to the opposite paling, gracefully reposing her shapely little head on Tabaco's broad back.

Mexican horses are docile as a rule, and show strong attachment to their masters. When Otto and Reata entered the enclosure, almost the whole of the dozen or so horses approached; some quickly, some slowly, each in the manner that best accorded with his character. Don Ramirez was among the foremost, stepping out with a sort of jaunty majesty, and carrying his nose very high. "Maraquita, Maraquita!" called Reata, making a step forward and holding out a very tempting slice of white bread.

It was a fortnight since Otto had seen Maraquita—on the day of the ride; and now as he watched her approaching with slow and dainty steps, the belief he had expressed of Arnold's being a very lucky fellow grew stronger in his mind.

"It is almost a pity," reflected Otto, "that such perfection should be wasted at Steinbühl. Why, there isn't her match in the regiment: she would beat the colonel's chestnut by long chalks; even Kreislich's grey mare could not rival her. That would be a triumph! Arnold is a lucky fellow—a confoundedly lucky fellow!"

"Well, Otto, have you found out anything wrong about Maraquita?" Reata inquired. "Why are you staring at her so intently? Her knees are not broken, or anything, are they?"

"I was only thinking what a pity it is that there is no second Maraquita agoing," he replied, with a laugh. "I would almost have had the impudence to petition for the other myself."

"I am so sorry there is not another like her," exclaimed Reata, with true regret in her voice. "I suppose you would not care for the 'Bony One' instead?" she added, laughing. "I daresay I could induce your aunt to let you have him."

Otto shook his head with more gravity than the occasion seemed to demand, and looked round with serious attention at the group of horses. Alas! he knew them all by heart—shaky-legged, broken-kneed, or under-bred,—a fault to find with each,—Maraquita, and only Maraquita, shining like a star in their midst. "Maraquita or none," he sighed to himself, despondently; and perhaps his face said the same thing, for Reata exclaimed, with an involuntary impulse, "I do believe

that you would like to have the horse yourself?"

It was Otto's own thought; but it rather startled him to see it so quickly guessed at.

"I *have* got a particular—a—a—liking for the animal, I must confess," he began, evasively, "quite apart from her merits. You know, darling"—and he lowered his voice a little—"Maraquita is connected with that day when you first made me happy. She seems like a sort of link. Perhaps it is foolish of me," he said, gaining confidence; "but I cannot think, without a pang, of her belonging to anybody else."

After all, what harm would it do if the horse went to one brother instead of the other? It would be no disappointment to Arnold; for he did not know of Maraquita's existence, and need never know of the chance he had lost.

"But surely not a pang if she belonged to your brother, Otto?"

"Well, it is not *quite* the same thing, you see, darling; and besides, now that I come to think of it, I cannot help fancying that in Arnold's position a valuable horse like that would be of very little real use. What he requires is more of a hack, all for work, and not for show. Now my case is quite different. Maraquita is just the make for an officer's charger."

"Then you shall have her," said Reata, decidedly, looking straight before her at Maraquita, not at Otto. "The Giraffe is sure to have no objections."

"But, dearest, do you not think that my aunt will take it amiss? and is it not rather hard upon Arnold?" he added, with a very becoming assumption of care for his brother's interests.

"Nonsense, Otto! it was your own idea,"—and as their eyes met, Otto felt startled at a subtle shade

he saw in hers—a flash of doubt, of surprise. It was gone in a minute; but it had been there.

"Of course you shall have Maraquita, if you like," she went on, slowly. "It will be quite easy to manage. You have the best right to her. I never thought of that before."

And so it was arranged; and if Otto's conscience felt a few slight pricks, they were soon silenced; "for it *is* much more natural," he argued, "that I should have her than Arnold, when I have come all the way out here, and have had the trouble of the long voyage."

Logical deductions were not exactly Otto's strong point; but he had a knack of adapting them to circumstances, which was convenient.

After that point had been settled a sudden silence came over the two. Otto felt conscious of a little awkwardness, and stood switching his boots and staring at the roan. Reata stood beside him, with her dress gathered up from the wet in one hand, but not looking at the roan—apparently only at the grass at her feet. Presently she made a move to leave the paddock; and this aroused Otto's faculties.

"No, not yet, my darling; do not let us go home yet. I have so much to talk to you about"—and he turned towards her with such tender entreaty in his face, that she smiled in spite of herself.

"But where can we go, Otto? I should like to have taken you to say good-bye to the Giant's Umbrella; but the forest is so wet for walking, and besides, it would be too far for you."

"Let us sit down here, anywhere," said he, looking round wildly for some sort of a seat. "There, that is just the thing"—and he pointed to a piece of prostrate trunk, which had been partly hol-

lowed out into a receptacle for water, but whose solid flat end presented a roomy and not uninviting seat.

Here they sat down ; and their quadruped friends, finding that there was nothing more to come, strayed off, and left the lovers to their own society.

They were alone virtually ; for neither the horses browsing round them, nor Ortega, seen in perspective at the far end of the paddock, occupied in hammering at a defective part of the paling, could be counted as disturbing elements. Nevertheless, when Otto, according to his now invariable habit, tried to get possession of Reata's two hands, she drew them away a little demurely, saying, at the same time, "No, no, Otto, that won't do now ; think of the stable-men."

"I only see a fraction of the back of one stable-boy," said Otto, throwing a vindictive glance at the visible portion of Ortega's body ; but he did not at once renew his attempt, for her manner had been decided, and he felt, unaccountably, a little ashamed of himself.

"How tired you look !" said Reata, after a little silence.

"Do you think so ? Yes, I had a bad night," he answered, flushing suddenly, and his voice sounding constrained. She did not make any further remark about it. She was waiting for something—waiting in suspense ; but he did not know it. He had hoped for an expression of sympathy, and was disappointed ; nor could he ask for it then. Strangely enough, there were moments when he was not quite at his ease in her presence—when he felt he did not understand her, and dared not assert the rights which he knew he possessed. At the present moment, too, his ease of mind was still further disturbed by the doubt pressing on him, and

which could only be solved either by a point-blank question, or by getting at the answer in a round-about way. Prudence and delicacy both recommended the latter course ; but some skill was requisite to do it well.

He looked at Reata, as if trying to read which would be the most feasible way of approaching his subject. Sitting on the tree-stem, with her hands clasped together in her lap, her head a little thrown back, and her eyes looking dreamily straight away before her, over the paddock and the paling, towards the green of the forest beyond, she looked the very embodiment of all that is called high-bred in a woman. Figure and attitude, the very pose of the head, seemed to Otto's eyes to reveal that stamp of patrician carriage which he professed to disbelieve in, but the recognition of which here seemed to him unmistakable. Was it not pure insanity to entertain a doubt ? How could she be otherwise than noble by birth ? Of course the question was superfluous ; but still it must be asked, and Otto tried to persuade himself that he felt no anxiety as to the answer.

"I told you all about my family the other day, when you cross-questioned me, darling," he began, in a would-be-playful tone. "It is my turn now, is it not ? You have never told me anything about your relations."

The dreamy look in Reata's eyes vanished at his first word. Her thoughts must have been far away, for she gave a little start and threw towards him a quick sidelong glance, which he, having his head averted, did not see ; nor did he see how rapidly her colour changed from red to white, and from white to red again.

"Oh, that is different with me," she answered immediately ; "I have

nothing to tell. You know I am quite alone. I have got no brothers and sisters, and I can't tell you anything about my mother."

"But you can tell me about your father, dearest, can you not? I think I have heard my aunt mention him," Otto said, wondering a little at the eager way she spoke in. "You know, everything about you must interest me."

"Yes, I remember my father," she replied, more quietly.

"The name is a German one, of course, but it is rather a peculiar one. I never heard it before."

"Do you find it peculiar? I don't. But then, of course, I am accustomed to it."

"How will you get accustomed to your new name?" he put in, with a further attempt at playfulness; "how will you like to be called Reata Bodenbach?"

"I don't know," she answered, turning her head away.

The beginning was not encouraging. Reata seemed to shrink from discussing her relations. Could she be aware of his motive? Otto felt unable to make up his mind as to whether she did know of that condition of the will, or did not. In any case his plan must be pursued—he could not live longer with that doubt on his mind.

"Do you remember that day in the forest when you laughed at me so?" he commenced, adopting a louder and more cheerful tone. "Surely you will teach me now how to pronounce your name? will you not, my own dearest? It would not do for me to make mistakes with the name of my promised wife," he added, persuasively.

"It is so easy to pronounce," she replied, without answering his pleading look.

"Now, come, my darling, do teach me. I am so bad at these things. Lackenegg, I know, is the

name, but on which syllable is the stress to be put?"

"On the first, of course," she answered, a little impatiently. "It is very easy to pronounce, I tell you."

"Lackenegg; that is it, then. Do let me hear you say the name once. I shall have it all right then."

"No; nonsense, Otto! You know it quite well. It is as simple as anything."

It would be wiser not to press the point, Otto felt; but he had gained nothing as yet, and he might not have another such opportunity as the present.

"I met a gentleman last year at Baden, a Baron Lackenegg," he said, with studied carelessness, as an angler would throw out a bait. "Some relation of yours, I suppose? How little I knew then——"

"No; certainly no relation of mine," Reata interrupted, decidedly; "it couldn't be."

"Why not?" he began.

"No, it couldn't be; it is quite impossible," she repeated, turning from him and splashing with her hand in the dull rain-water of the trough. The fringe of lashes shading her eyes hid a new light—a light of amusement which was gleaming there amidst graver reflections.

"Perhaps some very distant relation—one you know nothing about?" suggested Otto.

"Oh no. I have got no relations that are Baron Lackeneggs,"—a slight stress on the *Baron*.

"Well, then, let us leave the Baron by all means, and return to your father. He was settled a good many years in Mexico, was he not?"

"Yes, a good many years."

"And *his* father again, Mr Lackenegg's father, had not emigrated yet?" pursued Otto, more as if making an assertion than questioning.

He had got so near the perilous point that he could not draw back.

"No; he spent his life in Europe," she answered; and then added, with an odd twitch at the corner of her mouth, as if she was restraining an inclination to laugh, "he was pretty well known there, I believe."

Otto looked up quickly, with a triumphant sparkle in his eye—he was very near his object now. "Some great gun, of course," he thought, inwardly thankful.

"Oh, I daresay," he said aloud. "In the army, was it?"

"No, he was not a soldier," she replied, lightly. "His profession was quite in a different line; he *was* a professor, in fact, in the real sense of the word."

"Oh," said Otto, looking rather blank, but in the next second cheering up at the recollection of the numerous honours and titles which are so freely lavished on scientific men. A well-known professor might well be supposed to have been presented with one of those five-pointed crowns, of which I have spoken before; and it only wanted that, it only wanted the little prefix of *von*, to complete Otto's happiness.

"Where did he—did he——" began Otto, meaning to ask where the gentleman had hung out, but rather at a loss how to turn his phrase.

"Where did he practise?" completed Reata, readily. "Oh, at Heidelberg."

"Oh yes, the university," Otto answered, with skilful suggestion. "Was it mathematics, or philosophy, or——"

"Oh no, not the university at all," Reata again interrupted him. "And not mathematics or astronomy, or anything of that sort, but simply—*dancing*."

"Dancing!" echoed Otto, in perfect incredulity.

"He was a dancing-master; do

you understand?" she repeated, with almost a little testiness in her voice.

"A dancing-master! Your grandfather a dancing-master!" he exclaimed, turning pale. The surprise had taken him aback, and the words were out before he had time to recover himself. She did not answer in words, and just shrugged her shoulders ever so slightly, without letting him see her face.

"And when," asked Otto, in a voice which, in spite of every effort of will, sounded husky, "when was it that Mr Lackenegg got the *von* affixed to his name? Not that I care a straw about such things myself," he went on, with a last miserable attempt at playfulness; "but people expect one to be *au fait* of these things: very absurd it is, certainly."

He felt perfectly aware that he was doing the thing with clumsy hastiness: but the suspense would be borne no longer; he preferred risking everything at one blow.

When he had said the words, he gained enough courage to raise his eyes and look at her; and then with a new rush that almost drowned the agony of suspense, it came over him that he loved her to distraction.

She did not answer quite at once. Such a question might well need a moment's reflection. Perhaps she could not remember the exact date. The pause was no longer than twenty seconds; but they seemed to him like twenty hours. The fall of Ortega's hammer on the wooden paling yonder was beating time to the throbbings of his heart.

Reata drew her hand up out of the water, and watched the drops, as she allowed them to trickle from off her fingers back into the trough.

"When?" she repeated, slowly. "Why, never, of course. There

is no *von* affixed to the Lackenegg name; no member of the family has, to my knowledge, ever been raised to the state of nobility, or is ever likely to be so."

Otto felt as if those dull drops of water from off Reata's hand had fallen on to him with a chill. He sat without given any outward sign of agitation, save in the paleness which had overspread his face. The excitement of the last few minutes had suddenly ceased, had died out at the moment when the suspense was broken. She had spoken so distinctly, had worded her phrase so clearly, seemed even to have pointed it so directly, that not a chance or hope of a mistake was left to him. His mind was forced to accept the conviction—he could no longer doubt. The question of last night was answered—he was to be a poor man.

Some sort of a phrase he strove to get together—a remark, a question, anything to leave the subject, and not betray his agitation. While he was slowly collecting his thoughts, with a sudden impulse of womanly softness, Reata turned towards him, and laid her hand into his.

"Let us talk of other things, Otto," she said, gently. "I have been rather cross to-day, have I not? And it is so unkind of me on your last day."

She laid her head on his shoulder. The stable-men were quite forgotten now; and it was their luck that Ortega had moved out of sight, and was too gravely engrossed by his work to think of spying.

A delicious thrill dashed through Otto's veins, chasing away the chill, stunned feeling. His cares, his anxiety, the sense of his disappointment—all seemed melting away from him like puny spectres in the light of her love; and as, in the drunkenness of his delight, he

looked deep into the depth of her dark eyes, their magic power held him spellbound for the time,—Love, the only sensation of his soul—the knowledge that he loved her with a passion that was almost frenzy, the only consciousness of his mind.

"Otto, oh when shall we meet again?" she whispered, still clinging to him.

"Soon, my darling—soon. I could not live without you long."

"And will you love me then as you do now? Are you quite sure you will, Otto?" she said, in a trembling voice. "Remember you have never been tried," she went on, interrupting his protestations. "You have never been away from me since you loved me. You will think of me very much, will you not? Every day, every hour——"

"Every minute," completed Otto, fervently.

She answered his words with a smile.

"So will I," she murmured, very softly.

"Otto," she exclaimed suddenly, raising her head, "you do not think, do you, that I have got shallow feelings?"

"My darling, are you raving?" he cried; "what do you mean?"

Her eyes were fixed on his face with a look of earnest inquiry, and there was a tear trembling on the lashes.

"No, I don't think so myself. I hope I have not," clasping her hands together in her lap; "but they say that Mexicans are shallow, and cannot help it; and I am a Mexican, you know."

Otto, as he looked at her with that burning light in her eyes, and the quivering of her half-parted lips, thought that you might as well ask a volcano if it were cold, or the ocean if it were dry.

CHAPTER XVI.—TWO POLISH PORTRAITS.

The town of Rzeszów, in East Galicia, was the garrison town of the —th Hussars; a place not entirely devoid of natural beauty, but offering very few resources of society, or of what is generally understood under the term amusement.

A range of low well-wooded hills slopes down to a long narrow lake, a German mile in length: a broad, firm dam, shaded with old elm-trees, bounds it just near the outskirts of the town. On the lowest hill a picturesque old monastery overlooks the few scattered streets and the one *Place* of the town, where tall green poplars stand in irregular little rows and groups between the houses. In all this there is nothing objectionable, and if it had not been for the bottomless state of roads and streets during half the year, and for the ragged, slipshod Jews who offended your finer perceptions all the year round, Rzeszów might almost have been called a pleasant place in spite of its twenty miles' distance from the nearest railway station.

This is the place to which Otto is shortly to return; towards which, in fact, he is at this moment making his way across the Atlantic.

Now that the time of his leave was so close upon expiring, his comrades and the Rzeszów world in general began to get aroused to the possibility of his return. Hitherto they had been quite unanimous on the point that Otto would never again make his appearance on the scene; although they had not quite decided whether his sudden departure had been a necessary flight, or the stepping-stone to some brilliant new position.

"It is most incomprehensible!" remarked Langenfeld, one hot July afternoon. "Surely he might have given his friends some notion of what he means to do. He might have sent me a line in answer to my letter"—and Langenfeld twirled his moustache and looked injured, evidently thinking that the unwonted effort of letter-writing on his part might have called forth some response. Langenfeld had ridden out to Snyhynice to pay his respects to Count Przeszechowski's family, and his remarks were addressed to a very tall slight lady, who leant back on a sloping chair, carrying on the conversation rather listlessly. This was Comtesse Halka, the only daughter of the house. She was very tall, and very slight; in fact, her tallness would have been a defect, and her slightness would have been meagreness, had it not been that her woman's cunning, which so often supplies the place of artistic perceptions, had taught her how to disguise these faults.

Her hair was in colour fair; not golden, nor auburn, nor yet yellow—but a pale dead tint, which cannot be called colour, for its chief characteristic is want of colour.

Her features inclined to sharpness, but were delicately cut; the eyes light grey, clear and transparent, with the clearness and the transparency of glass; well-shaped eyebrows, which would have been handsome had they not been of the same bleached tint as the hair; a small aquiline nose and fine nostrils, which gave to her appearance something of proud high-breeding. The mouth was one which ought by rights to have been tightly closed; but when thus closed the lips appeared too thin, and for this reason

Comtesse Halka had taught herself to keep them a trifle apart.

Her appearance produced on the stranger two impressions: the first was of something that had faded slowly, and was still fading slowly; but, strange to say, the effect was extremely pleasing to the eye. Everything had faded softly, harmoniously, in keeping with each other, complexion and hair, and eyes too; for people who had known her some years ago remembered a bluer colour in her eyes, which was gone now. The second impression was, that she must have been very beautiful a few years ago; but this was incorrect. Comtesse Halka, at this moment in her twenty-seventh year, was fully as good-looking as she had ever been in her prime. It was her grace, and her manner, and her bearing which constituted her beauty; in some degree also her taste. At twenty she had not acquired the grace, and her taste was not matured.

Her manner was indeed striking; it struck by its intense calmness. Every movement, every action, every word was as quiet as the workings of some perfectly regulated piece of mechanism, which nothing could ever disturb. It could not be described as languid, or as phlegmatic—it was too skilfully guided for that; it was not heaviness either, nor pedantry: there is no word for it but calmness.

She never spoke loud nor quickly; she never laughed more than the lowest, quietest laugh; never stepped hurriedly, nor moved precipitately. Most people called her unaffected; but a few said that she only appeared so because she cultivated affectation as a fine art. Perhaps from the fact of having had her education completed out of her country, in a high-class French boarding-school, she was

entirely free from the obvious provincial affectations which characterise most of her countrywomen. It stood in her favour certainly that she never dressed too youthfully, nor attempted to disguise her age. To be sure, any attempt of that kind would have been useless, as everybody knew her age as well as she did herself.

The sight of Comtesse Halka was cooling on a hot summer's day, but chilling on a winter's one. It being in the height of summer now, Langenfeld was refreshed and enchanted. Her appearance to-day was particularly pleasant. She wore a dress of thin dark-blue linen, and in her hair were stuck a few faded corn-flowers, such as Langenfeld had noticed hanging on the stone crosses at the wayside; she looked as if she had faded along with the flowers.

"I am not surprised at Baron Bodenbach's silence," said Halka, in answer to Langenfeld; "you could hardly expect him to remember his friends over here."

She spoke quietly, but the very faintest imaginable tinge of pink had come into her face.

Langenfeld ground his teeth in despair. "I shall never get her to betray herself," he thought, impatiently. "I ought to have taken her more by surprise, and mentioned his name suddenly."

This was all very well in theory, but more difficult in practice; for how could he have walked straight up to the lady, and said abruptly: "Do you still think of Bodenbach? and shall you be glad when he comes back?" just in order to see whether she turns pale or faints?

Even this abrupt commencement would most likely have failed in its effect. She always was inscrutable in her serene calmness.

When quite a young girl she had once signally baffled the curiosity

of all the inquisitive eyes and gossiping tongues of the neighbourhood.

She was engaged to a Count A——, a brilliant *parti*, and within a few weeks of her marriage. The Count was challenged in consequence of some trifling quarrel, and declined the duel on the ground that the matter was not worth fighting about. Within the same hour that Comtesse Halka heard of it, she sent him back her engagement-ring, and this message: "A man who dares not fight shall never be my husband." Thus stung, the Count fought, and carried off a slight wound; but too late to regain his lost bride. While the incident was the talk of the whole capital, Comtesse Halka appeared that same evening at a grand ball given by the governor. She was dressed with her usual faultless elegance—calm and unconcerned as ever, and seemingly unconscious of the hundreds of prying eyes which devoured her every movement and dissected every expression on her face. Whether in later years, when no second such brilliant *parti* had offered itself, she repented her severity, no one ever knew; at all events, no word of regret at any time escaped her lips. Two years ago her prospects had undergone a change, when by the sudden death of her two brothers, who perished in a railway accident, she became an heiress; not in a very extensive sense, according to our ideas, but sufficient to make her a prize for most men.

Certainly Langenfeld might have known that any attempt to surprise her feelings must prove futile.

"Most of us think that he won't return at all," he said, fixing his eyes on Halka, with a sort of grim satisfaction.

"Really!" she replied, while with her long white fingers she re-

adjusted one of the loose corn-flowers in her hair. "I should not be surprised if your regiment were right. Will you not have some refreshment, Lieutenant Langenfeld?" she broke off, indicating by a slight change of tone that there had been enough of that subject; "you ought to be thirsty after the dusty road."

"If I was in his place——" began Langenfeld, impetuously, disregarding the offer of refreshments.

The cold surprise in her eyes checked him, and at the same moment he felt an amicable thump on his shoulder, and in the next he was embraced and saluted on both cheeks, after the usual Polish fashion, by a gentleman who joined the group with boisterous cheerfulness. This gentleman was well known to Langenfeld—well known, indeed, in all that part of Poland. His name was Boradembeki, and his age between sixty and sixty-five; but his hair was still black, and his colour fresh and ruddy. When gentlemen of sixty-five have got black hair, people are usually kind enough to insinuate that it is dyed; but nobody ever had been heard to hint anything of the kind about Boradembeki. There was something so irresistible about his frank countenance, something so convincingly honest about his plain features, and moreover, something so unstudiously careless (to put the matter as mildly as possible) about his personal attire, that nobody in their senses would for a moment suspect him of the deceits of dandyism.

It was merely that his hair, like his mind, refused to grow old. He was an old man, certainly; the number of his years testified to that, if nothing else did. He made no secret of it, would probably tell you his age in the first five minutes of acquaintance: but

it went against the grain to call him an old man ; it sounded incongruous—you could not do more than call him an old boy. In stature he was tall, or rather large ; everything about him was formed on an enormous scale. His head, if placed on any shoulders but his own, would have appeared gigantic ; his feet seemed to lie by the yard on the ground. It was rather trying to nervous or delicate people to shake hands with him ; you felt as if all your bones were getting crushed and broken ; and if you chanced to have a ring on, it required a little self-control to disguise the pain. Boradembki's hands had a reputation of their own. It was said of them that they were a remnant of the heroic age, when people used to lift up oxen, knock down towers, or perform other such trifling exploits with their hands.

There were many stories told about Boradembki's hands ; the one most frequently repeated was, that in the Revolution of 1848, when fighting single-handed, in a desperate position, surrounded by enemies, he had freed himself by seizing in each hand the head of an assailant and crashing them together with such force that they both dropped dead.*

I have not much more to say about his personal appearance, except that he a little inclined to stoutness, which, however, disappeared in his general largeness. He had black eyes and a black moustache, and his voice was thick and intensely deep ; not gruff or coarse in any way, but full-toned and good-natured. The wrinkles on his face, too, seemed more to be the puckers of good-humour than the lines of age.

Nobody had ever heard anybody say an ill-natured word of Bora-

dembski ; and the reason was, that nobody had ever heard Boradembki say an ill-natured word of anybody. He did not pretend to agree with you always, and he was not good at reasoning in his friends' favour, or turning off the subject lightly ; but he would refuse, absolutely and obstinately, to join in the abuse, and to all your arguments would oppose nothing but his unshaken belief that nobody in this world ever really meant harm. Where he did not praise warmly, you might be sure that there was a hitch ; and if he was silent, the individual in question could safely be condemned as a reprobate.

All that I have said just now may possibly give the reader the impression that this gentleman was an old fool. It is necessary to state that this impression is erroneous ; for in spite of want of varnish, and a certain simplicity of mind, his good sense was perhaps the soundest, and his judgment the most acute, in all the country. He seemed, in a certain way, to be public property ; he was "tame cat" in every house for miles around, only that *cat* is not the right expression, for it gives a wrong idea. He was the happiest man, too, for miles around : professing himself perfectly satisfied with all the dispositions of Providence and of the world ; living the life of a gentleman-farmer, in a very small farm which he rented from the rich Prince R—— ; getting up every morning at four o'clock, working like a horse all day at the management of his few acres ; and then, when a free moment occurred, going off at a rattling pace, in a rickety dogcart, to visit his friends and enjoy himself. Often, too, these journeys of his, from which no weather would detain him, were in

* A fact.

a way business journeys. If there was a family quarrel, anywhere far and wide, only within reach; if there was a question about money matters, or a difficulty about love matters,—Boradembki was sent for to settle it; and he always succeeded in settling it, and this sometimes in the gravest cases. There had been one or two instances when considerable sums of money were in dispute, and when going to law seemed inevitable, that both parties by common consent agreed to abide by Boradembki's decision, and professed themselves satisfied with his judgment. He was universal peace-maker and matchmaker to all the country, and godfather to every second child you met. It seemed as if he were too large-hearted to make any difference in his affections; they embraced everybody indiscriminately, whether strangers he saw for the first time, or intimates he had known for years. His interest in everything concerning them was not artificial—just part of his nature.

"If you were in his place, you were saying, young man, as I came up—why talk of being in any other place than the present one?"—this with a flourish and wave towards Halka, who, smiling a coldly gracious smile, was moving off.

"Come, confess, my son; I know in whose place you would like to be." Then, as Langenfeld muttered something incomprehensible, Boradembki, with a world of shrewd humour in his eyes, added, "Look after your friend's interests, young man; it is time he were back to look after them himself. Never try a woman's patience too far. What

if he returns and finds Kreislich in his place?"

This referred to a momentous passage in Otto's life. Once before this man had taken his place; and this was the whole secret of the soreness between them—a soreness which had far outlasted the pretext of the moment. It was nothing either tragical or romantic—nothing more than the old vulgar story of a worthless woman, who, having entangled a handsome and impulsive boy in her alluring nets, when wearied of his ardent but barren adoration, had deserted him for a more mature and richer captive, who was able to emphasise his devotion with solid offerings. Young as he was then, Otto had quickly recognised the worthlessness of his idol; and the disappointment in itself would not have left a lasting wound but for the sting of humiliation which it carried with it. It was not in his nature to forgive an insult to his vanity—less still an insult which exposed him to the ridicule of his comrades. It was his first practical lesson in the omnipotence of riches, a lesson which his nature disposed him to learn readily; and in learning it he learned a second—hatred and envy of the man who had outdone him.

Langenfeld did not know the details of this buried history, but he knew the outlines as well as Boradembki; and in his inner mind he acknowledged that the old gentleman was right, and that if the situation he had suggested should come to pass, it would not terminate without some unpleasantness for all people concerned.

THE GHOST OF MORCAR'S TOWER.

FOR three generations the direct heir to the estate of Morcar's Tower has not succeeded to the property. The last owner, Squire Fairfax, was a hale, jovial fellow, and had three stalwart sons, yet none of them lived to possess the place.

The eldest was killed when Clyde's army relieved Lucknow; the second fell a victim to the jungle-fever that haunts the moist rice-fields of Central India; and the youngest,—it gives me a choking sensation in my throat even now when I recall his fate.

The hero of the Playing Fields, stroke of the eight-oar in the most closely contested race that Oxford ever won, he was a favourite everywhere, and the pride of his home. I can see him yet, with his laughing brown eyes, standing up against the crack left-handed bowler, who came assured of an easy victory for Stepton over the eleven of Stepton-in-the-Fens. There were some of us who thought when he carried his bat that greater triumphs must be in store for that ready hand, that watchful eye, and cheery spirit.

A year later, when a pleasure-boat went down in a squall, the only hope left us was that he had not suffered long, for there was a dark bruise on the pale forehead when the body was washed ashore. His father never recovered the blow, but died soon after his boy; and thus it came to pass that I, a distant cousin, found myself the owner of Morcar's Tower.

The curse, if curse there still be, will be again fulfilled, for no children of mine will ever brighten the gloomy chambers of my new home. It matters not how I know this so certainly, for it is not my own story that I am about to tell. Suffice it

to say that the joy was crushed out of my life ere I was thirty, so that I abandoned my chosen career, and hid myself in a lonely cottage, thinking that in the quiet life of a student I might find solace for my grief. When first I heard that the old Tower was mine, I was unwilling to remove from the abode to which I had already grown accustomed; but on further reflection I decided that the effort must be made, and that I must not shrink from my new duties on account of the melancholy associations connected with the place. To the Tower therefore I went, taking with me the treasured volumes that were my only friends.

For obvious reasons I cannot give the true names of the localities I am about to describe, but they will be easily recognised by any one belonging to the neighbourhood who may chance to peruse this tale.

Morcar's Tower was situated in one of the flattest districts in England. In old days, before cannon were in use, it must have been a valuable stronghold, for it was then surrounded by a reedy fen, full of dangerous and unsuspected depths, and only practised guides could find the narrow paths that threaded through the grass and rushes. Gradually, however, the fen-land was reclaimed, though the drainage was extremely difficult; and a canal, more sluggish than any I have seen elsewhere, was cut across from the Ayder to the Deene. The soil was rich, and paid well; and at last a little town grew up, known as Stepton-in-the-Fens, to distinguish it from Stepton proper, or, as it was sometimes called, Stepton-on-the-Wold. This wold was nothing but a rise of the land on the west of the Tower, and would hardly

have been remarked in a less level country.

The Tower itself was more properly a keep, square and grim, built of dark-red stone that took a purplish hue when wet. Round it was a deep moat that on three sides had been hastily and carelessly filled up. Yellow hawkweed and the straggling ragged-robin grew in profusion on the unequal surface of the earth that had been thrown loosely into it; and I wondered greatly that my cousin should have allowed this disorderly fringe of weed to remain round the house. I remembered, however, that when my cousin Frank had once proposed some alteration, his father had replied, with unusual sharpness, that he did not choose to meddle with the moat. On the fourth side the ditch was its original depth, and a wooden bridge, with a high fantastic railing, crossed it where the drawbridge had formerly been. The walls of the Tower were enormously thick, and the interior was consequently somewhat sombre. There was plenty of heavy old-fashioned furniture, but there were few modern elegancies in the house. In the room that had been Harry's were two new easy-chairs, some engravings after Landseer, and some pewters and cups,—relics of the foot-races and sculling-matches of his Eton and Oxford days.

On the ground-floor were the drawing and dining rooms, with two smaller apartments; the bedrooms were up-stairs; and the servants—I had but three—lived in some newer offices quite at the back.

I myself chose to inhabit a curious turret that projected from one corner of the Tower, partly because it was light and cheerful, partly because I had used it when visiting my cousins in our boyhood. The round shoulder of the wold cut

us off early from the evening sun, and from the turret windows I could watch the light being stolen from our Fens by the advancing shadows of the fir-clad rising ground.

I loved to see the last glitter die off the canal, and from between the reed beds, to watch a lazy barge perhaps being moored for the night, a grey heron oaring his way across the opal sky, or a string of carts or team of horses going slowly homewards,—for no living creature moved quickly in the Fens.

When all was still, save that the frogs had begun to croak among the rushes, I turned to my books, and in mystic volumes, such as the history of the Rosy Cross, sought for counsel from men who, like me, had resolved to be alone.

One night, when I had been about a fortnight at the Tower, I sat up rather later than usual at my studies. A new vista was opening before me, and I seemed to be on the point of reaching over that indefinable barrier that separates us from the world in which spirit is the known reality—a world whose laws must some day yield themselves up to our mastery. I raised my head, and drew in a long breath of the night air that blew in at the open casement. While sitting thus, pursuing an argument in my own mind, the sound of a stealthy footstep on the stair caught my ear, and abruptly broke the chain of my thoughts.

Irritated at this disturbance, I resolved to forbid the servants coming up-stairs so late, and then tried to resume my reading. But the words on the page conveyed no meaning to my mind, and I found myself dwelling instead on that unwonted sound.

Suddenly it flashed upon me,—*I had not heard the step go away.*

My door faced the stairs, and only a very small landing inter-

vened. I looked at my watch ; it was half-past one.

Obviously none of the household had any business up-stairs at that hour,—had I heard the step of a burglar who was even now outside my door? I was unarmed, and beyond reach of help, for the bell in my room communicated with an empty part of the Tower, and I had not yet given orders for its alteration. Hastily and nervously I locked my door, and listened long for a retiring footstep, but not a sound came, and I fell asleep at last without undressing. Next day I felt somewhat ashamed of the nervousness that had seized me ; for though I do not boast of any special amount of animal courage, I had never before experienced such uneasiness. I concluded that my nervous system must be unstrung, and resolved to take more exercise than I had done of late.

I asked the butler casually, if he had been up-stairs late last night. He was an elderly man, and had spent many years in my cousin's service, and I thought there was something strange in his look and tone as he replied, "No, sir ; none of us were up-stairs."

A confused remembrance of a ghost story came into my mind, told long ago by a chance guest, and summarily cut short by the old squire. Perhaps the Tower was haunted, and a ghost was part of my inheritance ! I hesitated to inquire, lest I should put the idea into the heads of the servants ; but as I had little faith in the supernatural origin of so-called ghostly disturbances, I took sundry precautions against imposture. I had once been a fair shot, so I opened a long-untouched box, and got out a pistol that had lain there for two years. This I cleaned and put away in my room. I then ordered that candles should be placed there in

addition to my usual lamp, and desired that the bell should be at once altered.

When evening came, I sat down to my work, and read with quite my usual attention ; but I could not recall the keen perception of the previous night.

About one o'clock I felt my mind wandering involuntarily from my book, although I had not been aware of the lateness of the hour until I looked at my watch : a quarter of an hour later I heard a faint sound. I listened anxiously : it was the same step as before, coming slowly up-stairs ; the step of one who walks wearily—the step of a woman, for I distinctly heard the rustle of a dress. I quietly placed the lamp so that the light would stream right into the passage, cocked my pistol, and as the footsteps reached the door I threw it open. There was no one there.

A sense of horror seized me, and I think at that moment I would rather have met any visible foe than have stood face to face, as it were, with an empty sound.

Next morning Bond lingered unnecessarily in removing the breakfast things, and after glancing two or three times at me as I sat idly by the window, he spoke.

"Mr Fairfax,—excuse me, sir—but you don't look well this morning."

"I don't feel very well, Bond," I replied.

"Been disturbed at night, perhaps, sir," said the old man, pointedly.

"What do you mean? Why should I be disturbed at night?"

"Because you're the owner of Morcar's Tower, sir."

"Then there is a story that I don't know !" I exclaimed. "Go and finish your work, Bond, so as not to let the women remark anything, and then come and tell me about it."

When he returned, Bond gave me a garbled version of the tale I shall presently relate in the words of one immediately concerned; but he added, that since the commission of the crime that gave Morcar's Tower its evil name, it had been haunted by mysterious footsteps. No ghost had ever been seen, but these steps continually passed to the door of the room occupied by the owner, and there died away. My cousin, stout-hearted practical man as he was, had tried every room in the Tower without escaping from this terrible guardian; and Bond thought the nervousness caused by the nightly visitation had helped to bring about Mrs Fairfax's sudden death.

Had he been a richer man, the squire would have abandoned the Tower; but he could ill afford to do so, and in time became accustomed to the ghost.

"Did none of my cousins ever hear it?" I inquired.

"Yes, sir, they did. Mr James and Mr Frank each heard it before they left home for the last time. Mr Frank told me himself, sir, and said he thought it might be a sign he was never coming back."

"And Harry——?"

"Master Harry was so much younger I don't think he rightly knew the story. Mr Fairfax made the other young gentlemen and me promise never to tell it to any one; and Master Harry wasn't one to think of things of the sort."

"How did the others find it out?"

"Same way as I did, sir, by master changing his room so often. They got it out of Mrs Fairfax, poor lady, at last."

"Well, Bond, I suppose I can depend on you to help me if I try to find out anything about the ghost."

"Yes, sir; but I'd advise you to

leave it alone, if I might be so bold."

"My good fellow I can't go on living here without trying to understand this affair. If there is a ghost, there must be some reason for his or her coming; and if I could discover the reason, it might put a stop to these visits."

"Well, sir, there's no denying that would be a good thing; but I doubt you'll find it beyond you to manage."

"At least I'll try, Bond," said I, as he left the room.

That night I placed lamps on the stairs and in the passage that led to them, and made Bond sit up there that he might notice where the steps came from. I myself sat opposite the open door of my room, with my eyes fixed on the staircase. At a quarter past one, Bond called out, as agreed on, "It's coming, sir;" and a minute later I distinguished the first footfalls. Slowly and steadily they came up-stairs, so that I could count the number of steps; they crossed the landing, and the last one planted itself on the threshold of my room; then there was perfect silence.

I shuddered and called Bond, who came up white and trembling.

"Sir, the steps walked by me where I sat; I watched the lamp as you told me, but I saw nothing pass between me and it. I don't know where they began; they seemed to start at the end of the passage. Oh, sir, don't meddle with them, or you'll come to harm!"

"I hope not, Bond," I replied. "I am satisfied that there is no trick, and I must think what is to be done next. Go to bed now, for I suppose we shall hear no more to-night."

"No more, sir, the Lord be praised! It only comes once in a night; if it were oftener, I don't think anybody could stand it."

The old man evidently did not like the notion of a closer acquaintance with the ghost, but now that I knew exactly what happened, my own nerves were steady. I felt that here was an opportunity of testing some of the theories in which I was most deeply interested, and I resolved that no effort of mine should be wanting to prove them true or false. I believed in the power, possessed by a few strong wills, of influencing others at a distance; and my own studies had accustomed me to concentrate my thoughts, the first step towards exercising such a power, if, as I hoped, it was latent in me. I had never heard of any attempt to control a spirit by such means; but the idea did not appear to me impracticable. Where so little is known, experiments are of use, even though their results be only negative. If there is a spirit,—thus I argued with myself,—that wishes to communicate with the owner of this Tower, surely a reciprocal wish on his part might render the process easier.

Again, the simplest facts of mesmerism show that one will can control another; surely a spirit, freed from human grossness, should be sensitively alive to every influence exerted over it. It only remains to be proved whether I have the needful strength, and whether I can keep cool and steady if I succeed so far as to obtain obedience from the spirit.

Having settled my plan of action, I began by taking a long and brisk walk in the early morning. Before dinner I confined my reading to historical works, but in the evening I perused carefully a volume in which I had found much curious and useful information on mesmerism. Soon after midnight I seated myself opposite my open door, having previously placed the

lamps so as completely to light up the space before me.

Two rather ludicrous difficulties then struck me. In the first place, I did not know the sex of my unseen visitor. Bond's story would have led me to suppose that a man would haunt the Tower, but there was nothing masculine in the gentle footfall, or the sound of the trailing robe.

Secondly, I knew that I must keep one idea steadily before me, yet I could hardly go on repeating the same formula, and I could not think without words. This difficulty, however, was a very elementary one, and would be easily overcome by practice. I fixed my eyes on the doorway, where the eyes of a figure of average height would be, and soon succeeded in making myself think an almost uninterrupted "Come!"

Unfortunately, the night was boisterous and stormy, the wind screamed past the casement, and swept on, as if in a hideous fugue, across the gloomy fens; but as my senses grew more and more keen, I did not doubt but that I could distinguish the familiar footsteps, even through all this storm-music.

After a while, the blood moved faster in my veins, my eyes were unnaturally fixed and hot, and my breathing was constrained and rapid, as though every muscle were stiffened,—a sensation quite unlike the deep full inspirations of severe physical exertion.

I should not have realised how great was the tension of my will had not a gust of wind made a gate in the garden bang suddenly, when the quiver with which my nerves responded to the sound betrayed to what a pitch I was excited.

It was close on the hour for the ghost's visit. I passed my hand across my forehead and eyes, and at the same instant, distinct through

the wailing of the wind, I heard the distant footfall. I grasped the arms of my chair, and half rose in the intensity of my wish; but when the steps reached the top of the stairs, something seemed to give way in my brain, the room and lights swam before my eyes; but as I sprang up, with my hands to my temples, I saw, or fancied I saw, against the bright background, the shadowy outline of a figure.

It was an instantaneous impression, and I sank back as helpless and weak as a child,—all power of will entirely gone.

An hour passed before I could shake off my lassitude sufficiently to go to bed; but I slept soundly, and to my great satisfaction found that, instead of being fatigued, I was more active than usual on the following day.

To Bond's inquiries, I merely replied that I was carrying out a plan which I hoped would succeed in time, but that I could not give him the details.

It is unnecessary to describe the experiments of each succeeding night. I soon found that the power of concentrating my will increased with every effort. On three occasions I saw the same shadowy outline; but on each a chance sound disturbed me, or irresistible fatigue deprived me of strength just when I most needed it. At length I resolved to take one night's uninterrupted rest, and to begin my next attempt only a few minutes before one, so as to have more power in reserve when the critical moment should arrive. I was glad to find that I attained almost immediately the required state of concentrated volition; but I endeavoured to make my condition more natural than it had ever yet been. I gazed more quietly and observantly at the spot where I hoped the spirit might appear, and

made mesmeric passes as if before a figure facing me.

As one o'clock struck, my senses grew more alert; never before had I felt myself possessed of such subdued and controlled strength; even my breathing became deep and regular.

I could not account to myself for these novel sensations, but I was filled with a buoyant delight which was almost ecstasy. My hands, as I continued my passes, seemed to feel an opposing force, as though I were drawing a weight towards me. There was none of the former heat and excitement, but a genial warmth pervaded every limb.

I *knew* I had power over the spirit if I could but keep myself steady.

At last it was close on the quarter, when I heard the first step in the passage. I stretched out my hands in motionless command and expectation. As the steps reached the turn of the stairs the outline became visible once more; it grew distinct, came nearer, and pausing at the doorway, seemed to tremble and gather itself into the form of a woman in a clinging robe, who bent towards me with a look that I shall never forget.

She was very young, and the misery on her face might have made the hardest heart pitiful. In her eyes there was that abiding look of horror that sometimes remains after a great mental shock—a look almost impossible to describe, but which conveys its meaning instantaneously. Her mobile lips were slightly parted, and her small hands tightly clenched at her sides. Although every feature was distinguishable, there was no semblance of humanity about her; she was a pale shadowy figure, and the outline of her head and dress remained tremulous, as though ready to melt again into air.

As she gazed earnestly at me, I

felt that she could communicate her thoughts to a certain extent, and read mine, in this mysterious spirit-contact. I did not speak, but I thought the words, "Poor soul, I will aid you in anything you wish!" A faint smile quivered over her face, and she bowed her head and beckoned me with one hand. Taking up a small lamp, I followed, while she passed down-stairs. Her movement was exquisite in its floating grace, and I remarked that her steps were no longer audible: the sound of them was not needed now to plead for her.

She led me along the passage to a deep window overlooking the moat. Here she paused, and pointed to a panel in the oak wainscoting. I could see nothing peculiar, and glanced towards the spirit for further explanation. Again and again she pointed imperiously to the same spot. I tried to speak, but my voice refused to come, so I thought the question I wished to ask.

"Am I to search here for something?"

Her smile answered me, and she then signed to me to open the window and come out. Placing my lamp on the floor so as to be out of the draught, I got over the low sill and stood at the edge of the moat. The spirit floated a yard or two further, and pointing down to the ground, wrung her hands piteously.

"Did some one die there?" I asked in a whisper, for I felt that my power was waning, and it was no longer difficult to speak. The pale hands pointed to the breast of the figure, which was already fading, as though her desire was accomplished.

"Tell me," I cried, flinging myself down before her, "if I search the panel and this spot, will you be at rest?"

She bent towards me once more with a smile of intense peace on her face, and melted out of my sight.

Whether I fainted, or whether I fell into the deep sudden sleep that sometimes follows mesmeric exertion, I cannot tell, but when I came to myself day was breaking, and my lamp was burnt out below the open window.

After breakfast I gave Bond an account of my adventure, and could easily see that the good old man thought my brain was affected.

"You will help me to search the panel, Bond, and that will prove whether my story is true or only a dream," said I.

To the window we accordingly went, and Bond inquired whether he was to break the wainscot.

"Certainly not," I replied; "if there is a hiding-place here, there is some way of opening it, which I shall try to find before I allow the wood to be broken."

Inch by inch I examined the wood, and compared the mouldings carefully with those on the opposite side. My attendant's incredulity was so manifest, that I should greatly have preferred to prosecute the search alone, but by doing so I should have lost the testimony of an additional eye-witness to the discovery I felt confident of making. After a long and patient scrutiny I found in the lower corner of the panel an inch or so of moulding that fitted into the rest. Another quarter of an hour passed, ere, by a chance movement, I gave it the turn required to loosen it. When it came out, and showed a spring concealed below it, my excitement was very great, and Bond himself began to share the feeling, and hurried off for oil with which to clean the rusty metal. We soon discovered the secret of the bolt, and a portion of the panel slid back below the moulding, revealing a small recess in which lay a roll of manuscript tied with a black ribbon. Dust and damp had made the writing difficult to decipher; but when

the sad history lay spread before me, I decided to give it to the world, along with an account of my mesmeric experiment. I have modernised the spelling, and supplied a few obvious words that were either blotted or illegible in the original. The date was eaten away, but from family papers I know that it must have been August 1778. The manuscript ran as follows :—

“I am going to write down what has happened. It may be that no one will ever read what I write ; but should this paper fall into the hands of any pitiful persons, surely they will grieve for us.

“Mr Fairfax is a bad man. Heaven forgive me if I ought not to think him so ! but I must needs say it here. My father says he is not worse than his neighbours, and that it is the habit of most gentlemen to drink and swear in his fashion. If it be so, it is an ill thing for women that have to bear therewith. My father is a poor curate in Stepton. He has as good blood in his veins as Mr Fairfax himself ; but then he is very poor, as I have said. My mother and Mrs Fairfax were friends ; and when Mrs Fairfax died my mother took charge of the little baby she left, along with me. That baby was my Harry—Harry Fairfax of this Tower of Morcar's. He and I learnt our first lessons together from my mother ; and when we grew older my father taught us both. Old Mr Fairfax took but small notice of his son. He was usually hunting, or quarrelling with some neighbour, or having drinking-bouts at the Tower. I will say it again—he is a bad man. I feared him much, he looked so big on his black horse ; and he had a rough voice. I remember how Harry and I were gathering rushes to plait one day when he rode by on the narrow path that goes down to the white inn. The willows and

rushes were high ; but the black horse was so much taller that we could not hide, as we sought to do. Mr Fairfax called out with a strange oath that sounded loud and terrible, and jeered at Harry for playing with the parson's brat. Then he rode on ; and Harry was in a great passion, the like of which I had not seen before. When I was fourteen my mother died, and thereafter I had to take charge of our house. Harry always came for teaching from my father ; but he looked older than I did, for I had no money to buy myself new clothes, and was forced to continue in childish frocks when I might have worn gowns. At last an old and good friend of my father's sent money wherewith to provide me with sundry needful things ; and I remember that I was vexed because, when he saw me in my new attire, Harry did not kiss me, as was his wont. He loved books greatly, as did my father ; and he hated wine and oaths, and all the evil doings at the Tower. Mr Fairfax was angry, and called him a clerk ; but he did not interfere with him. And by-and-by he loved something more than his books, and I could not believe that it was so. But it was true ; and no creatures were happier than we when we sat among the osiers and talked of what we would do by-and-by. Father was sorely troubled when Harry told him ; but he was always reading, and had not time to think much of us. Besides, he loved Harry as his son, and all the more because he would not join in his father's wicked ways. We were just twenty when Mr Fairfax bade his son marry a young gentlewoman, whose father would dower her with certain lands that adjoined those of the Tower. When Harry refused, his father's anger was very terrible ; but as he gave no reason for his refusal, Mr Fairfax let him go, thinking to persuade him in

time, and with softer words. He, however, made speed to our house, and demanded that my father should marry us privately. This he would not hear of at first, though Harry urged it, saying it would be his safety—that Mr Fairfax had even said the damsel's brother should call him out did he slight her.

"He spoke so earnestly that at last father consented to make the needful arrangements, and we were satisfied. Alas! while he was absent, some rumour had come to Mr Fairfax's ear, and when Harry returned home he was made a prisoner in his room, and only allowed to issue from it for his meals. Mr Fairfax thought to tame him, but he knew not that there was a device whereby he might be baffled. In bygone days, when Harry was fain to escape from noisy guests, he would slip out at the passage window; or if the brawlers were too near the stairs for him to pass, he would let himself down by a rope cunningly made fast to an iron bar that was across his own window. A thin and narrow plank was concealed below the grass at the edge of the moat, being held by rope-loops to two pegs knocked into the bank. Once across the ditch, he was free, for the gentlemen were too busy within to espy him. Now, however, his father was always on the watch, fearing lest he should escape. We should have been in sore straits had we not had one friend among the servants—old Betty—who had seen my Harry born. She sped away to me with a message, bidding me to come at dusk, and Harry would meet me in the willow thicket across the moat: further than that he dared not venture.

"Was I wrong to go? I thought not; nay, I think still that I was right. Since the night that Harry put his signet-ring upon my finger I have belonged to him. How, then,

could I dispute his will? Moreover, he was in trouble, and I could not refuse to go to him in his need. Therefore I went.

"When it was growing late, so that it behoved me to return, he led me to the edge of the thicket and kissed me; and that was our very last kiss on earth, yet I knew it not. I would I had known, that I might have stayed to perish with my love. I hurried along the darkening path, but before I had gone far I heard an angry voice that seemed to be that of Mr Fairfax. I feared greatly for Harry, but I dared not turn back lest I should be seen and cause worse trouble, since it might well be that Mr Fairfax was only speaking to some groom or labourer. All night I could not sleep for terror, and next day news was brought to my father that Harry had disappeared.

"The country was searched for him; but I knew he was dead, for had he been alive he would have found means to relieve my anxiety.

"Mr Fairfax shut himself up, and drank hard; and after a few days he desired that the moat should be filled up.

"The work was begun, and that night I knew the reason.

"Again old Betty came to me, whitefaced and aged by many years. She told me the horrible thing that has never since been out of my thoughts. I see before me, day and night, the moat, the darkening path, and my Harry as he stepped off the plank and saw his father standing before him. Old Betty could not tell me what had passed, but Mr Fairfax had seen me, for she heard my name.

"After many furious words, Harry said clearly, 'I never will give her up!' Then—then—that cruel man struck him hard on the temples with the handle of his heavy hunting-whip. Harry fell back into the

moat and he never rose again. Mr Fairfax knelt at the edge and called him hoarsely, and when no answer came he rushed into the house.

"Betty was too terrified to say next day what she had seen, and I, —can I give up Harry's father to punishment?—I who have been the cause of my husband's death?"

The writing here became unsteady and indistinct, as though the poor girl's mind had begun to wander. It is legible on the next leaf.

"People look at me strangely; they thought I did not hear to-day when some one said I was mad. Am I mad? No! I am sure I am not; my brain is quite clear, clearer than ever, and each thought is as bright as if it were written in flame. I know what I am going to do. The moat is not half full yet, but in a few more days there will be no room in it. I must get Betty to hide this paper for me in Harry's panel cupboard; she taught him and me the trick of it long ago. I will not tell her why I want it hidden to-night; oh no, she might be afraid if she knew; and I must be quite alone, too. Mr Fairfax is drinking —always drinking. I am going to punish him; he shall have two deaths on his soul, two—two. God will never forgive him as much as that.

"I shall be safe with Harry; if anybody finds this they need not be afraid for me. I will fasten a stone over my heart that the water in the moat may hold me down tight till I find him.

"I will sign my own name to this —my name, that no one can rob me of now. PRISCILLA FAIRFAX."

I determined, after reading this sorrowful tale, to have the moat carefully searched at the spot indi-

cated by the spirit. That there might be no lack of witnesses, I invited both the doctor and curate of Stepton to be present. After reading the manuscript, they were to the full as anxious as I for further corroboration of its story. We knew that the Fairfax mentioned in it had died suddenly of *delirium tremens*, and probably the work of filling in the moat was then discontinued; for, as I have already remarked, it was of its original depth on one side of the house. As the workmen approached the bottom, they dug slowly and carefully. Complete success rewarded our efforts; for precisely where the ghost's finger had pointed, we found the decayed and broken bones of a woman.

The doctor gathered them up with his own hands, and in doing so, turned over some of the earth, and espied, sunk in what had been soft mud, a heavy signet-ring bearing the Fairfax crest. Encouraged by our discoveries, I then gave orders for the whole of the moat to be cleared, in the hope that we might find the remains of the poor youth who was so cruelly murdered.

We inferred from the MS. that his room must have been at one of the corners farthest removed from the hall; and our conjecture proved true. We found some bones, singularly perfect considering their age, and two or three metal coat-buttons. The latter I have placed with the ring and manuscript in a cabinet. To the bones we gave decent burial, depositing them all in the same grave. Since that day no midnight footsteps have approached my chamber; and I trust that the uneasy spirit has found rest through the discovery of her fate, and that nothing more will be seen or heard of the

GHOST OF MORCAR'S TOWER.

HIDDEN TREASURES.

TORLONIA MUSEUM.

WHOEVER has read Winckleman's Letters will remember the enthusiasm he showed when he wrote of Cardinal Albani and of the Villa Albani, with its then remarkable collection of ancient sculpture.

"This cardinal," says the celebrated German archæologist, "is the greatest antiquary living. He brings to light of day that which was buried in darkness, and he pays with the generosity of a king. What a man he is! He is over seventy-three, but he has the head of a man of sixty, and builds as if he were sure of living a quarter of a century longer."*

Change the name of Cardinal Albani to Prince Torlonia and these encomiums are as perfect in application, except that the prince of our day has done much more than the prelate of Winckleman's time. He has drained an immense lake—that of Fucino—a labour which the emperors of ancient Rome, with all their unlimited means, were not able to accomplish,—and thereby restored acres of land to the cultivator. As for galleries of art, the cardinal's collection at the Albani Villa was much inferior to those of Prince Torlonia's. Setting aside other works of art which the Prince has in various palaces, the Roman Lungara sculpture-gallery alone rivals in rarity and value most of the famous collections of other cities, without excluding the museums of Rome.

In the Lungara—Roman Trastevere—nearly opposite the beautiful Farnesina, and beside the Corsini Palace, is a little street called *Via*

delle Scuderie—street of the stables—so named from the stables that were used in former days by the Corsini. In the seventeenth century, when Queen Christina of Sweden held literary court in the Corsini Palace, she also stabled her horses and housed her splendid coaches in those ample *scuderie*. In these *ci-devant* stables, Prince Torlonia has established a provisional gallery for a matchless collection of sculpture. This museum is not open to the public. Indeed it is a difficult matter to obtain permission to see it. Probably not a dozen persons outside the Prince's art-council have had the good fortune to visit this fine collection which is so jealously shut out from the world. A little garden surrounds the building. Last spring I used to find the walk leading from the entrance gate to the first gallery white with orange-blossoms; they lay as thick as December snows; the path was shaded by the branches of orange-trees, and bordered by great bushes full of superb roses. I have sat alone on a June afternoon in the "Prometheus" or "Venus" cabinet, or in front of the beautiful seated "Livia,"

"Lapped in pleasant visions."

The soft air came stealing in through the thin walls of cloth, heavily laden with the sweetest of all odours mingled together,—rose and orange. The supremest silence reigned. Then I understood why the Prince keeps these galleries jealously shut out from the world he knows so well. He wishes to

* Winckleman's *Lettres fam.* Amsterdam, 1871.

possess, for a short while at least, a refined luxury that passeth the possession of kingdoms; to enjoy there a solitude of "high thoughts" outvaluing many lifetimes of vulgar reputation.

In this Lungara Torlonia Museum is a great treasure of erudition as well as art, which has been collected with tranquil silence, critical care, and patient study, during the course of at least thirty years. Year after year the Prince has summoned about him remarkable men, among whom Baron Visconti, nephew of the great Ennio Quirino Visconti, whose memory is closely associated with the fine sculpture-galleries of Rome and Paris, has been the most intimate confidant of his projects, acquisitions, and decisions. Each new statue, bust, or bas-relief, has been examined with the most scrupulous and critical eyes; also compared with ancient medals and coins, and passages from ancient and modern writers. Of these important meetings careful journals of proceedings have been constantly made; thus a valuable æsthetical and artistic unpublished literature has collected about those Lungara halls. When a statue was found in fragments, it was carefully put together. An accomplished sculptor, an expert in his art, Professor Guaccarini has devoted his entire professional life to the work of the Museum, aided by the counsels of the Prince and his learned assistants. One of the most remarkable groups of the collection,—Hercules and Telephus,—when found at Porto, was in almost unrecognisable little fragments. Baron Visconti, who was present at the excavation, and who knew the history of that superb suburb of Ostia, recognised the bits as belonging to a valuable work of art. Others thought not; but the workmen were obliged by an imperious command of the Baron

to gather the small pieces carefully together, and put them in a large basket which the persistent archaeologist took away with him in his own carriage. Two weeks after, these fragments were sufficiently united to prove the truth of Visconti's assertion; his well-practised artistic eyes were not likely to be at fault. Through Baron Visconti's patience and Guaccarini's skill the group was afterwards restored to its present complete state, and offers to us a specimen of antique art most curious in form and development, and which in justice ought to be known to the future visitors to the Museum as the *Ercole Visconti*.

Prince Torlonia has gone on from year to year with steady persistence, spending freely, and maturing this one fine idea,—the creating of a unique gallery of sculpture in the form of a private museum. He has found in this pleasant labour a relaxation from his severer occupations,—a noble pastime. In his gallery is a Minerva more perfect in some respects than the Minervas of the Vatican and Capitoline; a Venus that some say is surpassed only by that of Milo—other connoisseurs even go so far as to assert that the celebrated Milo statue may be regarded as inferior to the Torlonia Venus; an Apollo that is a gem, unique in this respect—it has all the attributes; a most remarkable statue of Julius Cæsar, with the laurel crown found at Bovillæ, where the Julian *gens* had a *sacrarium*; a noble one of Hortensius the orator; a Hesta that is believed by some to be pre-Phidian; a beautiful Prometheus; a seated Philosopher, that is indeed a remarkable work; portrait-statues of the Empress Livia—one seated, that is unique; also another seated statue of a beautiful woman. Besides these, there is a hall of the

Muses ; a grand hall of Athletes—four were found in that sculptural mine of Porto, and one at Porto d'Anzio ; a Cupid and Psyche far more lovely in expression than the famous Capitoline group ; a pre-Phidian galley ; a charming *biga* drawn by boars of *bigiomorato* and driven by Cupid—a most singular group,—the car is adorned with victorious insignia ; an interesting hall of animals ; and an imperial hall of busts ;—such a collection of portraits of the Roman Cæsars as does not exist elsewhere. Then there are fine bas-reliefs which have already served as important archaeological illustrations—those from Porto, for example ; great vases, exquisite in form, covered with the richest designs ; huge slabs of costly precious stones and marbles.

The richness and beauty of this Torlonia Museum are difficult to represent through the feeble means of nomenclature and description. The Museum should be seen to be appreciated ; but as that is impossible, at least for the present, I will endeavour to give an idea of it with as much brevity as the abundance of the material will allow.

When you enter, you seem lifted over into another sphere. A calm quiet which is inexpressibly charming reigns supreme throughout the halls ; an enchanting solitude such as cannot be enjoyed in any other art collections, because those are open to all visitors on the same days and hours, and there is hardly a

chance for simple mortals to secure a moment alone in them. It stands isolated in the centre of the great destructive human waves that dash up murderously like a lava-current only a few yards off, ruining priceless beauties of nature, and placing in peril some of the greatest works of art.* To artists, and to those minds who understand the exquisite enjoyment of art, of spiritual beauty, and high poetical sentiments, it may be compared to some lovely harem in an old Eastern tale, shut out from the world. Crowds pass and repass utterly unconscious of the unrivalled beauties that stand apart only the thickness of a wall ! Over two hundred years ago horses were neighing and stamping where now stand in godlike stillness those

“ Things of beauty, a joy for ever.”

There, in the places of the passionate animal-surroundings of one of the most passionate women who ever reigned, are silent statues,—visible memories of those far-off days of Homer and Theocritus ; of Phidias and Praxiteles ; of the period when were established for humanity perfect rules in perfect works, eternal models of the true and beautiful.

The rare good taste displayed not only in the distribution of this vast collection, but in the mode of exhibiting these sculptures, is worthy of note. The Prince has solved the hitherto impossible problem of arranging a gallery of art in such a

* The history of our day proves what Gregorovius says of medieval times—that Rome was never so much injured by Goths and Vandals as by her own people. The cutting away of the Farnesina gardens, which was done last year in the questionable enterprise of the Tiber works, is a most barbarous act. The noble groves of ilex trees that flourished there, which were nearly three hundred years old, have been ruthlessly destroyed. Nor is this all the damage done. Not only does the bringing of the Tiber bed so close to the Farnesina building subject the foundations to the insidious infiltration of the river waters, but the digging of the land has given such a ruinous shock to the walls and ceilings of the villa, that the precious frescoes of Raphael and Sodoma, Galathea, the exquisitely pictured story of Cupid and Psyche, and the marriage of Roxana, have already great cracks in them, and are visibly crumbling away ! In a few years they will exist only in tradition.

way that the eye sees only three or four works at a time, while the beholder is conscious of the invisible presence of the others. The Vatican, Capitoline, and Louvre museums are imperfect in many respects; even the Glyptotheca of Munich and the Museum of Berlin leave a less perfect impression of all their masterpieces than might be obtained by a different arrangement. The too scarce lights, the false half-lights, and, above all, the confusion caused by having too many objects assembled in one place falling under the eye, so that it cannot escape seeing them, are exasperating. A sensitive student cannot examine statues an hour in the Louvre, especially in the galleries fronting the Seine: the nerves of the eye and brain are painfully tortured by the glare of the sun and reverberation of light on the water and white stone walls outside, mingled with the gaudy colouring of the ceiling decorations. On the contrary, in the Torlonia Lungara Museum, the eye is not only spared fatigue, but is reposed by the clever arrangement.

The light is of course from above. The old stables are made into long galleries, divided by partitions of cloth of a soft, warm red-brown colour; and at short distances, again, subdivided into cabinets by curtains of the same material looped back on either side. Each cabinet con-

tains two large statues placed opposite one another. In each of the corners is a bust, a head, or statuette, and most of them are masterpieces. Thus you can stand at one end of a long *corsia* or gallery and look through the looped-back curtains the entire distance of ten cabinets and see only the great group, the standing or seated statue at the termination.

The whole collection is divided into four galleries; these galleries have four long *corsie* or avenues; twelve *sale* or rooms; and one imperial *sala* or hall. There are five hundred and twenty pieces in all,—statues, busts, and vases. The four avenues are the first divisions you visit. There are ten cabinets in each avenue. When you enter a cabinet nothing recalls to you the numberless marbles that stand behind the curtains on all sides; you perceive only the contents of the cabinet, can give your entire attention to the few works standing before you, and are not distracted by the sight of others. Thus you can examine at your leisure, without fatigue or disturbance, a few masterworks at a time.

Where there are so many masterpieces as in the Torlonia Lungara Museum it is difficult to select specimens. I will, however, mention a few of the works which may serve as samples of the contents of this beautiful collection.

II.

The most remarkable statue in the Torlonia Lungara Museum is the Minerva. It came from the Prince's excavations at Porto, where it adorned the imperial palace of Trajan. Porto—*Portus Trajana*—that famous suburb of Ostia, was founded by Trajan as a new seaport at the mouth of the Tiber, and be-

came another city in splendour and importance. Trajan built there a superb palace, which has been one of the most fruitful relics of antiquity for modern times, and has yielded treasures and treasures of statues, columns, and bas-reliefs. The palace was entirely lost at one period. A man hunting a badger

that disappeared suddenly in a hole, thrust his stick down and found that it entered into space. The spot was examined, a vast hall discovered, which had been the refuge of whole worlds of insects for centuries ; and when the exploration was continued, a veritable labyrinth of halls and corridors opened before the explorers : so vast was the construction that they had to use the compass to direct their steps as in an unknown forest. This great building contained splendid halls ; an imperial basilica, like the one on the Palatine ; several temples—one to Hercules ; a theatre—for Trajan loved the pantomime passionately ; also an immense portico. A century ago, when this portico was standing and little was known about the ancient history of the magnificent edifice, it was called *il Palazzo delle cento colonne*. All the land of Porto belongs to Prince Torlonia. He has had the almost unrecognisable ruins of the imperial palace thoroughly explored, and most of its sculptural and other marble treasures have gone to enrich the Roman Lungara Museum.

The great Porto or Torlonia Minerva has never been seen by the public. She stands in a sort of sanctuary with full-sized casts of the Vatican and Capitoline Minervas facing her. These alone are considered her fitting companions—for the claim is that she surpasses those famous representations of the most beautiful Phidian type that has come down to us.

The goddess is represented with all the emblems that recall her great and beneficent acts in favour of humanity according to ancient belief : she wears the aegis, helmet, and shield ; at her right is an olive-tree, her gift to the Athenians ; on one of its branches a serpent winds horizontally, emblem of wisdom and prudence. The drapery of the

figure falls from the shoulders to the feet in rich ample folds which lie in straight lines, and are so arranged that the arms are left free. The neck and throat are uncovered ; this, with the exquisite modelling of the neck, makes the Torlonia Minerva look taller than the Vatican and Capitoline Minervas. The drapery of the Vatican Minerva is probably finer, but the face and head of the Torlonia Minerva are much grander. The casque has the same symbols as the Vatican Minerva, but it is more elegant in form than either of the other casques ; it is delicate in shape, and adorns the head in a most graceful manner. The solemn sweet face, the beautifully modelled neck and throat, slightly framed by the falling hair, give the stamp of superiority to the Torlonia Minerva. The face, which has much more individuality than either of the other Minervas, is shaded by the helmet ; the eyes are deep set, and the expression of the countenance most intelligent. She seems really conscious ; her look appears to penetrate the hidden essence of all things. There is something finer than wisdom, too, in this expression,—a virginal tenderness that is almost rough in its frankness.

We will now go from this one of the most beautiful masterpieces of perfect Grecian art, to one of the most valued specimens of archaic monuments. The celebrated Giustiniani Hesta, 3d gallery, 5th hall, No. 395, was formerly well known to archæologists and artists, and was believed to be a work of the pre-Phidian school, one of the first expressions of a religious feeling in sculpture. She has not been seen since the last century. The Giustiniani collection went as a whole into the possession of Prince Torlonia's father, and was the nucleus of the Torlonia Museum in the Lungara.

Hesta was the goddess of fire: thus the left arm in the Giustiniani Hesta is raised majestically and the forefinger points up, as the emblem of the sacred flame. The other arm and hand are pressed tight against the body, indicating stillness and peace. The drapery is considered curious, as a first attempt at covering the body: the folds are solid, straight from the neck to the ground; this heaviness gives the figure the appearance of a Hermes. For a long while the wise archaeologists said it had no feet, but a clever woman detected at the back of the base of the statue the indication of the left foot lifted as in the act of moving. Standing beside this Hesta is a smaller one (No. 393), in which the image has become less archaic; the hand lying against the body is curved, and the feet are visible. In the presence of the large and small Hesta, you can follow the transition through which the physiognomy, gestures, attitudes and draperies passed from the stiffness of archaism to the divine freedom of the Phidian epoch.

The Venus, 1st gallery, 2d *corsia* or avenue, No. 104, is the one of which I have already related that some adequate judges think it is equalled in art-merit only by that of Milo; and others go so far as to say that it surpasses it. The face has the type of the Milo Venus. The body is nude; the left hand holds a drapery which falls over a vase standing on the ground beside the goddess. There is a graceful suppleness, a fullness of life, a majesty of lines in the body, such as Phidias gave to his Caryatides in the Nika temple on the Acropolis. All the lines are undulating. The pose has that noble ease and freedom—especially about the shoulders and middle of the body—which is so admired in the the two female sitting statues that

belong to the front piece of the Parthenon, called the "Elgin Marbles." This curved line, this *desinvoltura* in the attitude, is rarely found elsewhere, although it is beautifully indicated in the Venus of Milo; but on comparing the two it will be seen that it is not so accentuated in the Milo as in this splendid statue of the Torlonia Museum. The modelling of the back is most beautiful and remarkably fleshy. There is an expression of grave simplicity in the whole figure. The movement and action are entirely free from self-consciousness or shame. It is more grandiose than the Milo in this regard; and its beauty is more ideal and elevated than any existing statue of the goddess. If not made by Phidias, it certainly belongs to the very brief time governed by the Phidian spirit, principles, and traditions.

The Venus dei Medici has been regarded for two centuries as the celebrated work of Praxiteles,—the one that was valued as the most perfect type of physical beauty. Some coins of Cnidos are in existence, on which is a nude Aphrodite, known to be a copy of the Praxitelean Venus. Thus, when the Venus dei Medici was restored, after its discovery at Rome in the Portico of Octavia, the action and movement of the statue were made to correspond with the Venus on the Cnidian coin.

Pliny tells of a Venus attributed to Phidias, chiselled in a marble of exquisite beauty, which stood in the Portico of Octavia in his day. The Venus dei Medici, as I have said above, was found in the Portico of Octavia, Rome, in the early part of the seventeenth century; but no one has ever thought of attributing it to Phidias, or to the Phidian school. Probably the Torlonia Venus is the one of Phidias

of which Pliny speaks. She surely represents the Phidian religious type, which was always treated in an aphoristic way,—as a holy goddess—majestic, divine, full of purity; in a word, that beauty which is goodness, as the Greeks said,—*kalos kai agathos*—"beautiful and good."

The Venus dei Medici, on the contrary, is an expression of a later Greek day, the Praxitelean period, when the original pure idea of the Venus had passed away—its fine meaning was lost—the sensual form alone remained. Lucian gives an exact description of the Cnidian Venus of Praxiteles. That Venus was conscious; it had a gesture of shame such as we see in the Venus dei Medici; while the Torlonia has neither this expression nor gesture. It is a higher type of beauty; it represents the ancient Greek idea, when the goddess was regarded as the Celestial Aphrodite; the Venus Uranus, *a symbol of perfect harmony and beauty in nature*—Cosmos—emerging from the "waters,"—signifying in Hesiod, and ancient primitive symbols, as well as in the Bible, the first confusion of all elements.

In the 3d gallery, 5th hall, No. 280, is an Apollo, which should be ranked with the above-named statues. Like the Minerva, it came from the marvellous Porto imperial palace, and has never been in any public gallery. The god is represented as the Pythian Apollo with all his attributes. He holds in his left hand the bow; the right arm leans on the sacred tripod symbol of the oracle, around which the fatidical serpent winds in doubling folds, and rests its flat head on the border. Its intelligent, cunning look tells that it is listening to what the god is saying to his messenger, the winged Griffon. The Griffon—emblem of blind obedience and alacrity—stands at the left side,

with closed eyes and lifted paw, as if impatient to run, to fly, in order to execute swiftly the commands of the god. The drapery of the statue, which is a simple chlamys knotted on the right shoulder, crosses the upper part of the chest in straight lines, covers the left shoulder, and falls over the back. The lines of the figure and the groupings of the accessories are very harmonious; the modelling is broad and free; the lights and shadows, also, are singularly well balanced.

But the pose of the body and the expression of the face give this Torlonia Apollo an especial character. The form is slightly bent in one of those serpentine positions which the Greeks gave only to Apollo and to Bacchus—that god who also symbolised inspiration, *verve*, and that cerebral excitement which the Italians name so well, *l'estro poetica*. There is a fascinating freedom in this pose of the Torlonia Apollo, and also a cool high indifference, which, united to the expression of the face, creates its character of melancholy and disdain. The face is majestic and calm; but it is also sarcastic and sad, as if the god knew humanity would never have the good sense to profit by his revelations. This peculiar expression of melancholy and disdain is more powerfully accentuated in the Torlonia Apollo than in the most perfect statues that represent the god elsewhere—as, for instance, in the two or three of his fine statues of the Louvre, the Apollo Saurocthonos, the Apollo of the Villa Albani, and another Apollo in the Torlonia Museum, leaning against the trunk of a tree on which hangs the lyre. It is owing, in a great part, to the character of his look, which is fixed on his griffon, and whom he regards with a sad smile. This expression is deepened by the shadow which

the thick piled-up hair throws over the face. The hair is not in the twist known as the *Apollo knot*, which distinguishes the *Apollo Belvedere*, but it rises up and over the forehead. The mouth in the *Torlonia Apollo* has a peculiarity worthy of remark, as it is rare in nature, still more rare in statues—the smile lifts the lips without making the corners of the mouth thin. There is always a sadness in the *Apollo* faces. In the statue we are describing this expression is mingled with a pitying look, which gives to this

representation of the *Pythian Apollo* a character of sympathy and irony united, of splendid beauty; a condescension full of pity for the justice of the verdict hidden in the dark folds of the future. The Greeks alone possessed the secret of these subtle expressions. Never since their day has art repeated the attractive and mysterious sculptural word which this statue seems to utter so forcibly—a divine despair of a superhuman being, who cannot communicate to man the joy which comes only from celestial ecstasies.

III.

In the 1st gallery, 2d avenue, No. 98, stands the *Prometheus*. This admirable statue, which also belonged to the *Giustiniani Collection*, is bold and original in conception, poetical in treatment, and remarkably fine in the modelling, especially of the legs and shoulders, the muscles of the right knee, and the joining of the arms to the shoulder-blades. It is undoubtedly a work of Greek art. The body of the Titan is nude, the form is slender, spiritual, expressive of intellectual longing and desire. The audacious god has finished the image of man—a small archaic figure that stands beside him, stiff and lifeless; there are also the little rolls of modelling clay just as they are used by modern sculptors. The arms of the Titan are lifted above the upraised head; the united hands hold a torch,—he is watching eagerly to catch a divine spark of life for his creation.

This statue takes an important place in the history of Greek art, because it shows to what a high point the peculiar character of this nation—so gifted by nature—could elevate itself, in the highest manifestations of its men of genius,

above that materialism, sensuality, and love of sensible enjoyments, in which, however, its manners and intellects were finally submerged.

To express the superhuman force of a Titan, the artist has taken care to avoid the muscular strength which distinguished the *Athletes*—such admirable types of which we see in this very *Torlonia* gallery; still less has he thought of creating an ideal of physical power, always invincible and triumphant, as we are accustomed to see in all the statues of *Hercules*. The grandeur and force of this *Prometheus* is purely intellectual. To make us feel and comprehend the subject, he has modelled the body with such lightness and nervous elasticity, rendered it so slender and slight, that not only it seems to have the least possible materiality, but you might even say, in spite of the weight of the marble, that all the beautiful body is only an appearance—a soul—a spirit which has clothed itself with an apparent perfect human form in order to manifest itself to us; but at the same time, without that form being a veritable corporeal substance. All is vibrant, speaking, eloquent, full

of feeling. Indeed, if the Titan were not in the act of robbing the sacred spark from heaven to animate the little form beside him—which he has modelled, and which characterises a Prometheus, makes of him a Titan—we might say that this admirable figure was meant for a Christian archangel. And so light is it, that although it has no wings, it seems ready to dissolve into the air by the sole act of its own will,

“And what seemed corporeal
Melt as breath into the wind.”

Raphael and other artists tried to obtain this same effect of incorporeal lightness in their conceptions of the Archangel Michael. But they fell far behind that which was attained by the ancient sculptor in this representation of the Greek Titan, because they did not know how to give to their creations that supernatural perpendicularity. Their bodies have horizontal lines, they are too fleshy, too clumsy, too heavy for a superhuman being, although the little St Michael of Raphael, Louvre gallery, compensates by the movement for its materiality, which recalls that of a bird coming down in a flight from above. And, by the way, the legend of the Titan was after all only one of the forms tradition took in order to teach man what had been revealed about the great combat in heaven between the good and bad angels, and which ended by the evil spirits being precipitated from the celestial spheres.

In the same 1st gallery, 2d avenue, are two statues, Nos. 92 and 93, named Esculapius and Hygeia, which are indeed worthy of being mentioned among the works I have selected as types and illustrations of the remarkable excellence of the Lungara Torlonia Museum. They came from that marvellous Porto, the wonders of which I have

already told. A learned archæologist visited the ruins of the imperial palace at the time these statues were discovered, and his description of the *atrium* with niches where they stood, reads like the story of an enchanted palace. “The niches,” he writes, “were empty, but on the marble floor in front of them lay statues of exquisite chiselling, a Muse (Hygeia), an Esculapius, a stupendous bust of an Athlete, a half figure of Septimius Severus, a Leda, a Philosopher, a Slave, and a smaller Esculapius.”

The Porto Esculapius of the Torlonia Museum has a majestic dignified character, and, as the writer above quoted says, *è di squisito scalpello* ;” for the well-arranged folds of the drapery and the beneficent face are skilfully executed. The Hygeia, goddess of mental as well as physical health, is admirable in pose ; the transparent folds of the drapery show all the outlines of her body and its vigorous development. The neck-line is soft and tender, and the modelling of the throat is excellent. She is tending the holy serpent, and the sentiment expressed has in it something of maternal love, as if the Greek who created her had at that moment an intuition, a presentiment, of what Christian charity would be one day.

Esculapius and Hygeia were always placed by the ancients in healthy positions ; but Ostia and its suburb Porto are no longer favoured sites of these children of Apollo. When their beautiful statues adorned the imperial *atrium* at Porto, however, it was a delicious spot, “where the spirit enjoyed repose and the body recovered health. Romans went there to give themselves up to the delight of trampling on the sand of the seashore, which yielded softly beneath their feet, and to breathe that light

breeze which restored lost vigour to their fatigued limbs," as Minutius Felix says in his charming "*Octavius*," one of the most beautiful memories connected with the now desolate *Tiberina* coast.

The remarkable Hercules and Telephus group (Hercules Visconti) No. 296, 2d gallery, 7th hall, has been much talked of although it has never been seen by the public. It came from the temple of Hercules that was enclosed within the luxurious precincts of that great Porto palace of Trajan. This group presents to us a specimen of antique art which is very curious in development and meaning. Like Minerva and Apollo, Hercules has his attributes—the club and lion's skin. The god holds his son Telephus most tenderly on one of his great broad hands. The hind that nursed the child stands to the right and gazes up eagerly at her charge. The pose of Telephus is delicious and full of nature: one knee is bent and rests on the huge hand of Hercules, the other baby foot braces against his father's body; his little hands grasp the lion's skin on which he is seated, and which forms the drapery and head-covering of Hercules. The lion's head makes a sort of helmet; the teeth rest on the hero's brows like an upraised visor or a strange crown. The body of the god is so muscular that it is meagre, but at the same time vigorous and bold. The face of Hercules is inexpressibly sad, indeed pathetic; he looks up as if imploring Jove to protect the child, knowing but too well the ingratitude of human hearts, and the vicissitudes of mortal destiny.

The charming group of Cupid and Psyche, which I have already casually mentioned, is in the 1st gallery, 4th avenue, No. 172. It is also a work unknown to the

public, and was found near Castro Prætorio. The children are winged. Cupid holds Psyche's head back, and her arms are around him. The expression of the two faces is delicious. They gaze at each other intently: it is a look of deep spiritual felicity, which arises from the certainty of knowing and belonging to one another in eternal union and happiness.

The celebrated Capitoline Cupid and Psyche is evidently a *recapito* of the Torlonia group, with this difference—the Torlonia figures must have been an exact copy of some Greek masterpiece, executed by an inferior artist, while the Capitoline group was made by a most skilful executant who gave up the spirituality of the original conception in order to obtain the greatest perfection of corporeal beauty for his figures. The sentiment of the Torlonia group is far superior. The Capitoline is a masterpiece in the voluptuous style of one of those artists of antiquity who worked only to gratify the depraved, corrupt tastes of rich libertines, and suggested new pleasures by the representations of charming love-scenes. The Torlonia group is probably only a copy, and, as compared with the Capitoline, in mere execution an inferior one of the original conception, which the artist of the Capitoline Cupid and Psyche translated into a common love-scene. In the Torlonia figures, Cupid and Psyche gaze into each other's eyes; their souls seem to pass from one to the other in that supreme look which does not need a kiss to find in it their highest bliss. But in the Capitoline group Love does not seek for Psyche's look and soul, he only strives to find her lips; indeed she seems really to have no soul to give in a look.

In the 1st gallery, at the end of the 2d avenue, No. 62, is an

interesting and beautiful portrait-statue of a woman. The famous Agrippinas of Naples and Rome (Capitoline) are rough-hewn works in comparison with this finely-executed figure. It is probably one of the most valuable statues in the Museum, not only for execution and excellence as an art-work, but for its history and rarity. It is a seated portrait-statue of the Empress Livia Augusta, the famous and mysterious wife of Octavius Augustus, the mother of Tiberius. Notwithstanding the long reigns of her husband and son, her unbroken power and influence during an unusually full period of life, there seem to have been but few portrait-statues made of her; there is none existing in this position.

It was found in the Villa Gordiana of tragic history, the vast heap of ruins now known as the Torre dei Scetriavi on the Via Prenestina, where its opulent but ill-fated masters collected so many treasures. The peristyle of the villa had two hundred columns of the rarest marbles, three basilica were within its enclosure, luxurious baths which equalled those of Rome, a superb theatre, a large library of 60,000 volumes, galleries of the most precious works of art, all that wealth and luxurious desires could collect together. The Gordiani claimed descent from Scipio and Trajan; but in the degenerate third century, when they lived, they were so steeped in the enjoyment of ignoble pleasures that they refused the empire of the Roman world; and when obliged to accept it at the point of the sword, father and son cowardly committed suicide to relieve themselves of the cares and perils of imperial power. From the ruins of their magnificent villa came this remarkable statue of Livia Augusta in the Torlonia Museum.

The pose is that of a woman,

tenant salon, as the French say. Livia was one of the first among the Roman women of rank who attempted this difficult social task—one that was rendered more easy to her by her imperial position. She assembled around her the learned men of the court, to the great pride of her husband, who often held her up as an example to his fascinating but grossly immoral daughter Julia, Agrippa's wife, who, on the contrary, drew about her the idle and licentious wits of Rome. So lifelike is this beautiful statue, that when you are sitting in front of it admiringly, it will seem to you that you also are a silent member of her court, and you will wonder—as did undoubtedly many of her courtiers—how much was good and how much bad of that sphinx-like woman, who unrelentingly, with horrible silence, secrecy, and pertinacity removed all who interfered with her aspirations for her son Tiberius—and yet who died full of years and honour—"the type of all that was noble and virtuous in woman," as the historian Tacitus tells us.

This statue has the attributes of an empress; the semblance of the golden footstool and golden sandals; imperial diadem and veil over the head. The attitude is noble and majestic, more erect than the Agrippina pose; very conscious—not vain or conceited, but a sort of knowledge of being on grand parade. The position of the fine hands adds to the listening observing character of the face. She is evidently directing the current of conversation silently, by her strong look and influence, not leading it by word of mouth. The deep-set eyes seem to be noticing her audience and penetrating to their most hidden thoughts. You can readily imagine her circle: the emperor and Mæcenas; Horace, and the tragic

poet Asinius Pollio ; and Virgil, inspired by the dark subdued glow of her beautiful eyes, is reciting verses, probably those of the Fourth Book of the *Æneid*. The handsome clever women of her husband's family are there—her rivals—who hated and feared her, whom she despised and ruined. She is in the plenitude of her state and beauty. There is a calm, graceful, but imperial dominating air pervading the face and form ; and the poise of the head is most effective. The face is beautiful ; the features delicate and exquisitely refined ; but the expression is as sombre as we see in the portrait-busts of her husband, from the one of the young Augustus even to those of his old age. The drapery is masterly in its arrangement, and the position of the sandalled feet on the footstool is most graceful. It is indeed an enchanting statue. To sit down before her in that captivating solitary gallery, with an active imagination and a memory full of the history of those remarkable times, is like the keen pleasure gained from reading volumes and volumes of the subtlest fictions.

There is another Livia in the Torlonia Museum—2d gallery, 7th hall—a colossal statue representing her as a Goddess of Plenty, or Ceres, with the fruits of the earth in her left hand. Her right arm is extended, the hand holds a sceptre. The drapery is a study of style, it is so beautifully managed. There can be nothing finer than the manner in which the mantle is arranged over the right shoulder and breast of this statue, and the way, too, that the upper garment is held under the left arm. The whole figure is very majestic and grandiose in style. When you look at the poppies in the left hand, the emblem of quiet and sleep, you will shiver as you remember what deadly quiet and unending sleep she gave to her

rivals ! Beautiful and unprincipled ; cold, quiet, resolute, deeply versed in that practical philosophy which carries everything before it in everyday life, never giving up the secret pursuit and accomplishment of her ambitious plans,—these were the qualities which gave that strange woman her power and influence, enabled her to maintain a false reputation before the world, and make of her in history a unique character, in the presence of whom Semiramis and Cleopatra, Catharine of Russia and Christina of Sweden, seem as trivial coquettes or sensual courtesans.

No. 75, 1st gallery, 2d avenue, is to my individual taste the most lovely statue in the Museum—the one I should like to own above all the statues in the world. It is likewise a seated statue of a woman—a good Roman work of the early Augustan period. It was found as it stands, without crack or break. The Greek marble in which it is chiselled has a strange granulated exterior, caused by the infiltration of the water through the earth where the statue lay buried nearly two thousand years, and which produced this curious sanded surface. There is more freedom in the attitude than in that of the Livia. The expression of the face, the unconsciousness of the pose, seem to belong to a solitary moment. The limbs are very elegant ; the arms are delicate but round ; the drapery tight, beautifully arranged, and entirely free from mannerism. The folds of the under garment which are seen through the upper are soft and irregular as they would be in nature. The chair on which she is seated—*sella arcuata*—instead of being held or supported by heavy masses of drapery as is usual, has a great mastiff lying in a familiar position under it. This dog has a faithful protecting look which adds to the

deep personal interest you are sure to feel in the statue, and his massive head and body contrast well with the long lithe limbs of the graceful woman. The outstretched delicately-formed feet are bare: these naked feet show that the original was already dead when the statue was made. It is a memorial or monumental portrait. The remarkable expression on the face of this figure proves that the sculptor must have known his model well; it is one of bitter sadness: the lips are drawn upwards with a feminine expression of scorn, as if her intercourse had been with souls unworthy of her and encountered undeserving disappointments. It is certainly the portrait of a high-bred woman; beautiful, poetical,—perhaps a poetess herself,—who would willingly have given up her whole life, with all its social privileges, with all the pleasures of art, of literature, of high thoughts, for a great love, a great passion; but the manacles of destiny held her where her spirit was, without companionship, and thus she regarded human existence with the most bitter feelings. The expression of her sorrowful eyes, the compressed lips, the sad vacant attitude, recall to you a sister of René with the intense melancholy which Chateaubriand impressed so heavily in his period. That woman, you would say, must have stamped her sadness upon all who surrounded her, in order to have been so exquisitely rendered after death. When we recall the epoch of the chiselling of this statue, the corrupt reign of Octavius Augustus, with its mysterious hidden crimes, the universal unbelief in ancient faith, and the subtle pervading of the new reve-

lation, you may say that the pure high-bred woman is asking herself with sorrowful scorn: "Well, then! what shall it be in this coming life? Our gods—or the Christ of the Jews?"

A learned German, who is one of the favoured few visitors to the Torlonia Lungara Museum, has lately singled out this beautiful statue as his favourite in the large collection, and written upon it an elaborate study such as only a German can make, and which has had much success. He tries to identify it with the statues of the ill-fated good Agrippina senior, wife of Germanicus. He has visited all the sculptured semblances of that remarkable woman at Rome, Naples, and elsewhere, and has excellent photographs, representing her as seated and in busts, to illustrate his study. Clever as his essay is, he is nevertheless far out of the way of truth in his conjectures. The type of the face in the Torlonian statue is totally unlike that of the Agrippinas; it is a beautiful oval, while the unhappy mother of Agrippina junior has a broad face. It is true, however, that the scorn, the bitterness, the intense sadness of this lovely countenance express well what such a woman as Agrippina senior must have felt in those evil times, when death with all its mystery and uncertainty to a pagan, was far preferable to life. Besides, Tacitus describes Agrippina as a concentrated, austere, cold woman, the very type of an antique Roman matron; while this Torlonia statue is a luxurious woman, chaste from scorn not from virtue—a true type of what might have been called in that day as now, "a modern woman."

IV.

At the termination of the 2d avenue, 1st gallery—the opposite end to the seated Livia—No. 115, is a standing portrait of great historical importance, which represents Hortensius, the celebrated Roman orator and advocate—"the King of the Forum,"—as he was called; Cicero's rival and almost contemporary.

The Torlonia portrait-statue of Hortensius is peculiarly interesting and valuable, because it was found at this very Laurentium where stood the Roman orator's sumptuous villa, and was undoubtedly his own well-approved portrait, for which he stood in all the conscious pride of handsome presence, as the sculptor modelled from life. It represents Hortensius at his proudest moment, the instant of successful debate. And with what interest we look on it when we think that probably the great Roman lawyer directed the fine arrangement of those majestic toga folds, which he knew so well how to drape, how to bind them around the torso, to lay them across the broad thorax, to let the great semi-circular fold fall in front its fullest

sweep, and to poise the loop of the mantle on the right shoulder in that uncertain position that was sure to fall at the first movement of an unskilful wearer, also to make that fine twist and knot over the breast, which afterwards became such a mannerism in Roman togadraped statues.

When the Torlonia Hortensius is known by the public it will be counted as a companion of the famous Demosthenes of the Vatican, and the matchless Antonelli Sophocles of the Lateran. The three will make a curious and useful study. The Hortensius placed beside those fine typical Greek works will show the whole difference existing between the characteristics of Greek and Roman nature; of men inspired by native genius, and men fashioned by an artificial borrowed civilisation, whose minds were more occupied with the advantages gained from the distinction of class than with glory of country.

In the 1st gallery, 2d avenue, No. 80, is the statue known in the past century as the Ruspoli Philosopher,* a very noble and fine work of Greek art. At first

* Palazzo Ruspoli, from whence this fine statue of the philosopher came a century ago, is at the south-west corner of the Corso opposite the Condotti. The site was originally a garden, and called Orti Ruccellaj; on it Ammaniti, one of the leading architects of the sixteenth century, built this palace for the Ruccellaj family. It has a superb staircase composed of one hundred and fifteen steps, each one a solid block of Parian marble, and each one cost eighty gold *scudi* in that day! Nearly two hundred years ago the palace passed into the hands of a Cardinal Caetani, and thus became the Caetani Palace. It was a veritable museum of art. After the art-loving cardinal died, the palace went to his relatives. In the last century

"Un quattro, un cinque e sei"

of the dice-box which had played such havoc some time before with the great Mattei family, did the same sad work for the Caetani. A Caetani duke rattled the dice-box so often, and lost so heavily, that he was deep in debt; his heaviest creditor was a rich banker, Ruspoli of Siena, then flourishing in Rome. The Ruccellaj-Caetani Palace on the Corso, with its vast collection of art-treasures, paid only a portion of his debt to the banker, simply "went on account."

The banker Ruspoli's daughter, by the way, married a Mariscotti of Bologna.

sight it recalls the supposed Aristotle which is in the Spada Palace in Rome: the one that Braun classed among the most important monuments of the Roman sculpture-galleries. The Spada Aristotle, however, is totally unlike the Ruspoli Philosopher of the Torlonia collection in sentiment; he is a thinker occupied in wrestling with his own thoughts; his antagonist is within, and means to be loyally treated: there is an elevation on the rough old face which is full of high meaning. But the Ruspoli Philosopher is in the act of arguing, demonstrating to an outside, visible combatant: the intellectual face is quivering with anger; he is in the rage of discussion. There is no aspiration in the countenance, but a powerful determined look as if he meant to overcome his antagonist. The meagre body and furrowed face, seamed with wrinkles, are worn by thought and study, not by dissipation; indeed there is an intellectual chastity in this statue as attractive to the mind-lover as the purity of a virgin. The charm of this chastity is revealed to an attentive

observer in all the details; in the extreme delicacy of the flesh, in the part where the neck is united to the breast, with a grace that is quite feminine. There is a bit between the head and shoulder on the back which is treated with a finesse that is astonishing in a male statue, especially when we remember that it represents a rugged man careless of his person. It proves, however, that the sculptor knew how grand is the strength of virtue and spirituality—they never fail to imprint in some way on the person the stamp of beauty. The position of the body, as well as of the head and face, is expressive of an argument. The right shoulder, arm, and breast are nude; they are treated with great sculptural delicacy, and are very fleshy in the handling, although, as I have already said, they are meagre. The right hand, which grasps a scroll, rests on the lap, and the whole upper part of the body leans over on this right elbow. The left hand and arm are enveloped in the drapery and lie close to the body.* The left shoulder is thrown up,

Vittoria Ruspoli received a royal dowry from her father on condition that the Mariscotti name should be dropped for Ruspoli, and that no descendant of hers should aspire to a higher title than marquis. But her son Francesco bought with part of his grandfather's great fortune the fief of Cervetri of the Orsini; moved heaven and earth to become a prince, and succeeded.

The account Venuti gave a hundred years ago of this Ruccellaj-Caetani-Ruspoli Palace shows what a museum of sculpture was in it.

"Besides divers *bassi-relieve*," he wrote, "there are busts of emperors and statues of ancient philosophers, a marble colossus of the great Alexander, a statue of Bacchus, a Consul, the Emperor Hadrian, Apollo, a Mercury, and a woman as a Hercules, with a lion's head, thought by some to be an Iole."

This "woman as a Hercules, thought to be an Iole," is a Julia Domna. It is now in the Vatican caves. The body is almost nude, and has a lion's skin for drapery, the claws of which clutch the breast.

"There are other statues," continues Venuti, "of Claudius, Hadrian, and Esculapius, of Apollo, of many Fauns, and the Three Graces."

This group of the Three Graces, which is like the group at Siena, is also in the Vatican caves. Leo XII. (Della Genga, 1823-1829) would not allow these figures nor the Julia Domna to be placed in the public Vatican galleries; he said "they were too voluptuous."

* Greek orators never gesticulated; their hands were usually enveloped in their mantles. There is a story attached to the famous Demosthenes statue of the Vatican which explains why he is holding the scroll in both hands in front of him. Demos-

giving the body a questioning position. The drapery is very simple ; it is wrapped about the middle, covers the legs, and the folds across the knees are broad and harmonious. The feet are coarse and large, with vigorously modelled sandals which have rough leathern straps and thongs : the right foot is advanced, lifted a little at the front, and rests on the heel ; the left is in retreat, raised at the heel, and rests on the toes. There is a peculiarity in Greek portrait-statues of philosophers worth noting, and which is very striking in the Ruspoli Philosopher. The sculptural treatment of the body is entirely different from that of the face. The body and drapery are handled broadly and kept in great masses ; while the head, the central point of the work, is almost picturesque, it is so vivid, so full of lifelike portrait expression.

A bust in the 2d *corsia* or avenue, 1st gallery, No. 61, is another excellent type of the valuable qualities of this Museum. It is a most characteristic portrait-bust of the Cyrene orator and philosopher, the opponent of the Stoics, Carneade. Some modern writer has called this distinguished Greek the Bayle of antiquity. Valerius Maximus said he was the laborious and indefatigable soldier of philosophy. He was sent to Rome

with two other distinguished Greeks —Diogenes the Stoic and Critolaus the Peripatetic—to protest against the fine of 500 talents imposed on the Athenians for plundering the city of Oropus. Pliny the elder called this deputation of learned Athenians “that imposing embassy of three princes of wisdom.” During the Roman mission Carneade delivered some remarkable declamations. And what an audience he had ! The wise Lelius ; Scipio Africanus, the conqueror of Carthage ; Galba, the great orator ; the learned Sulpicius Gallus, who predicted the eclipses of the moon before the battle of Pydna ; the juriconsult Scevola ; and the fine man of letters, Furius Philus. But the stern, terrible Cato was also one of his listeners, and was so shocked with the sophisms of the cunning Athenian that he rose in the Roman senate and demanded that this false specious reasoner should be sent back to his own country, in order that he might not corrupt the minds of the Roman youth by his subtle false arguments. Many writers attribute to those famous lectures of Carneade the beginning of Roman corruption. They say that the ignorant simplicity of the Romans was entangled in the refined worn-out speculations of degenerate Greece. Rome, at that time young, practical, and straight-

thenes, as history informs us, spoke repeatedly to the Athenians warning them against Philip of Macedon ; but the people would not listen to him. One day when he saw the audience turning their backs on him as he rose to address them, he cried out, “A man hired an ass of another man.” Instantly the people returned to listen. “At noon-day,” continued Demosthenes, “he stopped the ass on the journey, fed him, then lay down in the shadow of the beast to rest. The owner passed by, and seeing the man sleeping, was angry. He shook him roughly, and said, ‘I hired you the ass, it is true, but not his shadow.’”

The people who had flocked around Demosthenes listened to every word breathlessly : he observed their eager attention, and was filled with anger. Seizing a scroll in both hands, he exclaimed, “O Athenians ! my countrymen ! When I talk to you of your political danger, you will not listen, and yet you crowd about me to hear a silly story about an ass !” Then he poured out one of his finest philippics. It is this moment of indignation that the Vatican statue is supposed to represent.

forward, needed a strong, healthy philosophy. But love of conquest and thirst for riches had more to do with the ruin of Rome than subtle, sophistical, Greek philosophy. "Poverty, mother of heroes," had long disappeared from the City of the Seven Hills before Carneade arrived; and "Opulence, that avenges the vanquished world," was the fatal mistress leading Romans to their destruction.

Carneade was noted for a negligence of person which this bust represents. The head, for example, is very rough and unkempt; the expression of the face is cool and indifferent, but there is a keen outlook in the eyes, and the mouth has a cunning, self-satisfied curve. The head is round and smooth in form, so is the face. The impression the bust gives you is of an acute reasoner, a selfish character, and an unbelieving man.

How different is the head of Aristotle, No. 47, 1st avenue, which was found in the Torlonia *scavi* at Porto d'Anzio, where the great imperial villa stood, and where the Vatican Apollo of the Belvedere was found, also the Borghese Gladiator of the Louvre! This bust is an excellent study of good modelling. The head is that of a serious thinker, a fine moralist; it is high, well built up, with broad brow; the hair hangs over the round full temples. The face is square, energetic, and thoughtful; it has broad, clear planes of surface, but is not round nor smooth. The eyes are not large, but they are deep set; the upper eyelid is arched, and the under one sinks in; they are far-seeing eyes, and have an eagle-piercing look. The nose is large, well-formed, and indicative of energy. The mouth is firm, but the full upper lip makes the smile benevolent. The chin comes for-

ward with an upward curve, and adds to the kindly expression of the mouth; the vigorous jaws contribute great force and strength to the countenance. It is a handsome face; the features and expression indicate the highest, best nature. It is good to look at and study such a bust, which is a fitting representation of that great man who sought wisdom and found her, who saw the substance through the form; indeed it is a fine contrast to that of Carneade, the subtle reasoner who strove to destroy all faith, while Aristotle did his best to raise human character and human intellect to its highest elevation.

Volumes might and undoubtedly will be written in the future on this marvellous collection of sculpture in the Roman Lungara. The Hall of Athletes, for example, should have an elaborate study. We see there figures of the great *hieronymos* as well as the ordinary professional athlete; and the whole history of Isthmia, Nemea, Olympia, and Pythia stands in that hall illustrated with the finest models. The pre-Phidian collection also will furnish material for many studies; and the imperial series of portrait-busts will be of infinite service to the student of Imperial Rome;—an Ampère would make it glowing with life. This imperial series, by the way, has not its equal in any museum. It has been formed with the most scrupulous exactitude, and each bust made more certain by comparison with the Roman numismata. There are one hundred and two imperial portraits, in which the Cæsars are represented as hereditary princes as well as emperors; and with them are busts of the famous imperial women; also five of distinguished personages contemporary with the first and second

triumvirate — Caius Marius, and Sylla, Pompey, Lepidus, and Brutus.

This collection of imperial busts is a Suetonius in marble, in the matter of frank expression of character, and much more complete than that imperial chronicler; for in it is the whole range of Cæsars, from Caius Julius to Maxentius and his son Romulus, who ended old heathen Rome with the name that founded it. There they stand with tell-tale faces that disclose the characters created by the dangerous possession of despotic power. Two Nero heads, for example — Nos. 434, 435—are very curious, and suggestive of that strange emperor's character. One is as the hereditary prince, the other as emperor. The handsome boy-face is even more cruel than the imperial portrait. The eyes have a furtive, cunning watchfulness in them, and remind us of what his biographers tell us—that he was first cruel from fear. His mouth is like his grandmother's and mother's, the two Agrippinas,

but stronger, and inexpressibly haughty. The hair has a barbarian thickness; it rises up around the temples and forehead, as on the head of a young bull. The imperial bust looks more sensual and ferocious, but has an increased cunning in the expression. It recalls Tacitus's description of this man, formed by nature to "veil hatred with caresses."

This collection of imperial portraits, by itself, would be a most valuable possession: added to the adjoining galleries it completes, with sumptuous perfection, the richness and variety of the Museum. The whole gallery is to the students of mythology, iconography, and Greek sculptural art, as valuable as a choice library of precious *codici* to the historical scholar. Time, patience, learning, exceptional advantages of nature and wealth,—only these qualities combined could have assembled together such a rare collection as is contained in the solitary Roman Lungara halls:

NEW BOOKS.

THERE is nothing that philosophers object to more decidedly than the very common observation which the ordinary spectator of human affairs finds it difficult to avoid making, that the course of humanity runs in cycles, and that our globe revolves in a spiritual as well as in a physical sense. It is true that this runs contrary to all the laws of development, and to all the doctrines of human perfectibility. And it may be that the philosophers are right. Those who see deepest into the social millstone may perceive the little gain that is made at each new revolution, which—one infinitesimal improvement added on to another—may come at the end of some vast course of ages to show a real improvement in man and in life. But persons of dimmer faculties, and less power of divination, may be pardoned if from one generation to another they miss the advance, and only see the recurrence of similar phenomena, the return of the wheels of being to the old groove. We are old enough to remember the time when the eighteenth century was in extremely bad odour with all the guides of popular opinion. It was the eighteenth century that whitewashed our old churches, and encumbered their fine areas with senseless pews; it was the eighteenth century which, when it found a noble old building sacked and rent by the violence of an earlier age, carted away the stones, and used up the materials, and made a ruin where only a breach had been. On the other hand, it was this same century which gave false gods to literature, preferring the correct to the great, Pope to Shakespeare, and finding Milton on the whole less satisfactory than the 'Night

Thoughts' of Dr Young. It was finicking and critical, fond of china, fond of dress, delighting in fictitious and not very cleanly decoration, in scandal, and in tea (which it pronounced *tay*) on one side, though wallowing, according to its own showing, in all the vilest indulgences on the other. This is the opinion which we were instructed to form of the seventeen-hundreds. The dirt and the affectation, the nicety and the nastiness, the elaborate felicities of style with nothing to say, the ignorant contempt of the past, and supreme self-satisfaction with which it regarded its own achievements—its indifference to nature in all its sublimer forms, and love of landscape-gardening—were all set before us with vigour and a certain reason. But now the whirligig of time, that circle of continuous contrast which philosophers dislike to hear of, and humanitarians deny, has brought us back, if not to the eighteenth century, at least to such an ameliorated reproduction of it as our changed circumstances make possible. As we approach the centenary of that wild and bloody ruin in which, in one country of Europe, all those nastinesses and niceties were engulfed in such a swift and horrible destruction as gave the characteristics of the age their deathblow everywhere, we look with more and more tenderness upon the eighteenth century. Its houses and its dresses have become the fashion, and literature itself has taken up its forms and examples. The critic and the essayist have regained a place in the present time, which an age of ruder impulse and more primitive vigour seldom accords to them—the weight or importance of what a writer has to

say having once more become of almost less importance to us than the grace with which he says it. In a far lower and less justifiable form, Gossip, which is to the living and little what criticism is to the great and the dead, has seized upon that easy literature of the moment which is all that many persons in this busy age are capable of reading. On the lower level the imitation is pernicious and debasing; but the return of the Essayist is less inconvenient. At all times, the greater part of us, whom labour and want of leisure, if not want of power, forbid to be students, are thankful for the services of the guide who communicates the result of his own studies in an easy and comprehensible form. Perhaps there are too many of those guides about the world: the paths begin to be encumbered with them. As each new "Series" springs into existence, we find in the literary world a somewhat ludicrous resemblance to one of those show cities where tourists congregate. An intelligent *valet-de-place*, a bold and pertinacious cicerone, lurks at every corner. "The Greatest Artists of the world," says one, with a touch to his cap; "the Hundred Greatest Men," cries another. We doff our own bonnet with discreet respectfulness to the admirable scholar and writer who, under the very shadow of Maga, has opened the gallery of the Ancient Classics to the unlearned, and to the able imitators who have followed on the lines he was the first to open up; but the accumulating hosts dismay us. When we have a handbook to everything, shall we be much better informed? Our fathers of the age of Anne did not dream of any such torrent of instruction; for indeed a watchful and enter-

prising Trade was not then, as now, on the alert to make the most of every idea.

But it is from the eighteenth century that we have got back the essayist, who now once more occupies a place among us. If we cannot altogether claim for Mr Leslie Stephen* the charm and grace of Addison, we can, at least, say of him that he is far more disposed to give a reason for his judgments than that exquisite writer, and prefers to lead us with him in agreement, or at least consent, rather than to call upon us to follow by mere force of authority. These hundred years (and more) have made a difference so far. It does not affect the ordinary public now (as Mr Matthew Arnold points out in his volume of essays†) to be told that certain poetical personages "not only interest the reader in their afflictions, but raise in him the most melting passions of humanity and commiseration." To be sure, a very recent attempt has been made by three bold professors of pictorial art to set up a more than Papal authority over public opinion and private judgment in respect to the works of a living artist. But supposing even that the world should agree to this dictation, we have learned to feel less confidence in the word of our conductor into the realms of poetry. If he cannot make us agree cordially in his opinion, he has not advanced us at all in the appreciation of his subject, or in our allegiance to the poet whom he expounds. Mr Arnold himself, we think, has now and then shown a tendency to the more summary and dictatorial mode of proceeding, as a man who is well aware that he knows better than most other men, has, no doubt, a right to do; but Mr Leslie

* Hours in a Library. By Leslie Stephen. London: Smith, Elder, & Co.

† Mixed Essays. By Matthew Arnold. London: Smith, Elder, & Co.

Stephen is far too fastidious and sensitive, too keenly alive to the absurdity of every arbitrary assumption, and to the unpleasant things which are capable of being said of every man who claims to be Sir Oracle, to fall into any such error. If he is conscious of knowing much better than the rest of us (which is probable), he keeps that fact most judiciously in the background, incapable of offending himself by its production, whether he might offend us or not. To tell the truth, we are by no means sure that the man who does shake his lordly locks aloft and proclaim himself an authority, is certain to offend his audience by so doing. On the contrary, the persistent adoption of the part of oracle, ignoring or silencing the dogs that insist on barking when he opens his mouth, is a most effectual means of securing it with the vulgar, on whom continuance and steady duration always tell so much. In this particular the two accomplished writers whose names we have placed together differ greatly from each other. They are both masters of English, and boast that limpid distinction of style which is one of the highest results of culture, entirely different from the natural splendour of voices more individual, the utterance which some men are born with—yet not less, perhaps more beautiful, in its soft yet strong continuous flow: and they are both members of that class upon which Mr Arnold comments largely in one of the essays in his present volume—"the large class of gentlemen as distinct from the nobility,"—"not of the nobility, but with the accomplishments and tastes of an upper class,"—which he says is peculiar to England. Of this class, which holds in its hands the standards of manners, morals, and taste, more than the aristocracy itself, Mr Arnold and Mr Stephen

are admirable examples. They have intellectual endowments much superior to those which are general to their class, or to any class; but yet they are superiors among equals, indisputable representatives of their kind. The grand difference between them is, that Mr Stephen puts forth no pretensions to be a Pope, or even a grand inquisitor; while Mr Arnold cannot help letting us see that he is at least of the stuff of which infallible beings are made. It is needless to add that the elder writer possesses one great distinction which the other does not in any way rival. Mr Arnold is a poet of no small pretensions. It is equally unnecessary to say that with this side of his great reputation we have at present nothing to do. The books before us stand on very similar ground, and naturally compete with and supplement each other.

There is one word, however, to be said as to their contents to start with. That literary essays of a high order should be reprinted from the magazines in which they find a sort of lodging for the moment, and set themselves up, as it were, as permanent members of society, in the actual dwelling-house of a book, is no doubt highly desirable in some cases, and quite justifiable in others; but the selection of the essays should be made upon some rule which will bear examination and stand the test of reason. Essays such as those on "Democracy" and "Equality," in Mr Arnold's book, have a distinct *raison d'être*. We may not agree with their conclusions—we may differ even as to the power with which they treat the subject, as well as the manner in which they regard it; but when all is said, we are glad to be able to find what such a man has to say on such questions under our hand in a convenient form, and fully allow

that what he has said has a right to such promotion. But when we find mere critical articles of no particular importance one way or other, criticisms of a critic, reviews of a review, laid up and garnered for posterity within the boards of a book; and reflect that to all eternity, or as long as booksellers and book-lovers endure, Matthew Arnold's works will be incomplete without the volume of which these unimportant sketches form a part, we are disposed to conclude, either that there is a great want of discrimination in the author's mind, or that it is a most exaggerated self-importance which thus permits him to believe that every insignificant sentence which falls from his pen is worthy to be garnered up. To be sure—is it Southey that says it?—making money is always more or less laudable when you have nothing better to do; and if the public will pay two or three times over for Mr Arnold's account of M. Scherer's criticisms upon Milton and upon Goethe, there is no valid reason why the means of doing so should not be permitted it, to the profit of the author's pocket if not of his reputation. But so far as the reputation goes, we are obliged to say that it is not desirable. It shows on Mr Arnold's part a total absence of that critical faculty in respect to his own productions which he exercises so unhesitatingly in respect to others. Still more entirely unsuitable for republication is the review of Mr Stopford Brooke's 'Primer of English Literature'—a very good review, clear and lucid, and highly satisfactory, no doubt, to the author whose work is under discussion, as well as to the periodical in which the review appeared; but in no great degree superior to the ordinary level of clever reviews in magazines of the higher class, and altogether un-

worthy of being seriously treasured up as permanent literature. At this rate, if every periodical writer had as high an opinion of himself as Mr Matthew Arnold, we should be nationally in the position of the man who had to pull down his barns and build greater. No library, however immense, could have room for the unspeakable torrent of books which such an example would pour upon the weary earth. The magazine, that half-way house between the ephemeral and the permanent, that fine and free listed field of literature, would lose its chief privilege and charm.

Mr Leslie Stephen's reprints are very seldom subject to this reprobation. One or two perhaps may be found scattered among the three volumes of the 'Hours in a Library,' which might with advantage have been left in their native periodical. Nay, let us correct our statement: there is but one of which this can certainly be said, and that is the criticism upon Elwin's edition of Pope, which, as being a critical discussion, not of an author and his works, like the rest, but of a certain contemporary publication, is not worthy, we think, to take a permanent place among the fine and thoughtful critical descriptions and sketches which fill the rest of these volumes. In them a large number of notable figures pass before the critic. He discusses the genius, and character so far as it affects the genius, of writers so unlike as Balzac on the one hand and Jonathan Edwards on the other, and extends his survey from the Elizabethan age to our own, from Massinger to Kingsley, with an unfailing and delicate intelligence which is not a common gift even in the most admirable of writers. Let us not be supposed to lessen Mr Stephen's gift by employing this word to express it. There is no

finer endowment than this same intelligence, which preserves its possessor from those misapprehensions which often spoil the most able work, and exhibit the critic in the most ludicrous contrast with his professed omniscience. Nothing could betray him into such a depth of self-committal as the famous "This will never do," which has, more effectually perhaps than his many better judgments, conferred a luckless immortality upon Lord Jeffrey. But at the same time, it must be added that contemporary writers are much less apt to commit themselves in any way than were the dashing and reckless fathers of periodical literature. That kind of literary sharpshooting is now left to the anonymous reconnoiters of the press, whose credit is not pledged to any great extent, and who in some cases have perhaps no great amount of credit to pledge.

It seems natural, having alluded to one of the most important of the band, though in perhaps an ungenerous way—for it is, we admit, unkind to label Francis Jeffrey with his most unfortunate mistake, as if it were the most characteristic of his utterances—to turn to Mr Stephen's article upon the "Edinburgh Reviewers," which forms part of his last volume. It is the only paper in which there can be said to be anything like this self-committal, which we have asserted to be very much rarer now than in former days. About the other subjects treated by Mr Stephen, the world has pretty well made up its mind. We are glad to have his clear and delicate estimate of Cowper and Fielding, of Scott and Walpole. But yet our opinion is tolerably fixed in respect to those great personages, and the critic's powers are not employed in any attempt to make us change this opinion, or to impress a new view of his own on the world. But in the

case of the Edinburgh Reviewers, it is, more or less, a new view which he gives forth. Never was a literary feat more celebrated, or a set of literary men placed in a more conspicuous position, than that which good luck, and a remarkable crisis, and a loud and persistent blowing of their own trumpets, conferred upon the little band who established the first-born of modern periodicals. They did, let us grant, a great feat in so doing. The beginning thus made has had many momentous issues. When we think that even Maga herself, venerable and respected muse, who has inspired so many, might not have been save for the 'Edinburgh Review'!—for though we devoutly believe that our own genesis is a more exciting story, and that such an exuberant genius as that of Christopher North had no sort of representative on the other side, yet it cannot be denied that the blue and yellow periodical had the advantage of priority, and was the first magazine of modern days—the fountain-head of that varied stream of serial literature which up to this moment shows no signs of drying up. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of the initiative thus taken, or to refuse a certain admiration to such a feat of literary audacity and cleverness. There has been no literary triumph since so continuously applauded. The men by whom it was done were all very well disposed to celebrate their own and each other's prowess, and spared no pains to impress a sense of the greatness of their performance upon the world. Partly by reason of that performance, and partly by their real energy and talent, most of these adventurers became well-known and notable personages in later life; and the narrative of their early adventure, so brilliant, so rash, undertaken with such *gaieté de cœur*, has

become as one of the legends of the gods to their successors. It is very characteristic of Mr Stephen that the hitherto unquestioned enthusiasm with which this piece of literary gladiatorship has been received by the world, should have roused a certain impatience in his fine and fastidious mind, notwithstanding the links of hereditary connection which might have given him a prejudice in favour of, rather than against, the 'Edinburgh Review.' We are all tolerably well aware, when we think of it, that though Jeffrey was a very successful Scots advocate and judge, and Sydney Smith a noted wit and social celebrity, and Brougham the winner of all kinds of contemporary successes—a Lord Chancellor, and for the time one of the foremost men of England—yet they have none of them left any great treasures of literary worth behind them; but this has not hitherto affected the artless conviction in which we have all been brought up—that the establishment of their periodical was one of the most brilliant episodes in literary story. It is to demolish this tradition that Mr Stephen has addressed himself, and he does it with a completeness which is almost cruel, picking up his victims upon the point of a weapon which has something of the disenchanting quality of Ithuriel's spear. It is unnecessary to tell over again the oft-told tale of the little band of venturesome young men, who, without the least notion of what they were about, in reckless youthful daring and impertinence launched forth this new venture upon the world, in the midst of the animated interest and opposition, the fierce partisanship and emulation, of that characteristic Edinburgh which now exists no longer, and has left no successor, so far as we know, in the world. How much the scene

had to do with the success is a question which Mr Stephen does not enter upon, though it is a very interesting one. Nothing that ever was done in big London could by any possibility have moved the contemporary mind as the two great literary undertakings of the time, the Review and the Magazine, moved the limited but all-excited and sympathetic society of the Scotch metropolis, then in its full flush of intellectual influence, and capable of flinging itself into the discussion of literary, moral, and political subjects with a complete, earnest, and fervent appreciation of their importance which perhaps no other modern community has shown. A wider audience would not have been so convulsed with one impulse: and it would be difficult to calculate how strongly the sight of this unanimous excitement affected the judgment of the rest of the world.

However, Mr Stephen does not feel himself impelled to account for the success of the 'Edinburgh Review,' so long as he can demonstrate that it was not owing to any special power in the Edinburgh Reviewers. The result is unquestionable. The first number had an "electrical" effect. "Its science, its philosophy, its literature, were equally admired. Its politics excited the wrath and dread of Tories, and the exultant delight of Whigs. It was, says Cockburn, "a pillar of fire; a far-seen brand suddenly lighted in a dark place." How this effect was *not* produced, let Mr Stephen say for himself.

"Let us speak," he says, "the plain truth at once. Every one who turns from the periodical literature of the present day to the original 'Edinburgh Review,' will be amazed at its inferiority. It is generally dull, and when not dull, flimsy. The vigour has departed, the fire is extinct. . . . Mak-

ing all possible allowance for the fading of all things human, I think that every reader who is frank will admit his disappointment. Here and there, of course, amusing passages illuminated by Sydney Smith's humour, or Jeffrey's slashing and swaggering, retain a few sparks of fire. The pertness and petulance of the youthful critics is amusing, though hardly in the way intended by themselves. But as a rule, one may most easily characterise the contents by saying that few of the articles would have a chance of acceptance by the editor of a first-rate periodical to-day; and that the majority belong to an inferior variety of what is now called padding—mere perfunctory bits of work obviously manufactured by the critic out of the book before him."

This onslaught will take away the reader's breath. There is something, we cannot but feel, impious in the freedom with which those demigods are taken down from their pedestals, and the softened dust and cobwebs of sanctifying time rudely brushed off them. For Mr Leslie Stephen it is evident nothing is sacred, not even the illusions of a hereditary party, the traditions of his own craft, the respectful prejudices of the trade. To say that Jeffrey and Brougham would be turned away from the door of a modern editor is like saying something disrespectful of the British Constitution, a liberty which we should not wonder if Mr Leslie Stephen were also capable of taking. Brougham he treats everywhere with contempt—a contempt against which few people, we believe, will care to defend him. The collapse of this once brilliant and important personage is one of the most extraordinary things in recent history. Why should our papas (we do not say fathers, which is too large a word for the occasion) have thought so much of him, and we so little? Or was it not even the real opinion of the generation

that was in his favour, but only that his own restless and boundless activity kept him in the foreground of everything? Time has bowled him over, almost at the first blow. Mr Stephen does not take the trouble to prove anything against Brougham. "His writings are hopelessly commonplace in sentiment and slipshod in style. His garden offers a bushel of potatoes instead of a single peach." (Not a good simile this, for the potatoes are much the more nourishing and useful of the two products, more indispensable than peaches, and more valuable, if not so delicate, which is not, we presume, what Mr Stephen means.) But Jeffrey is not dismissed so summarily. In his case, with so many points in his favour, the critic takes pains to justify his judgment. "Jeffrey knew history as an English gentleman of average cultivation knew it; that is to say, not enough to justify him in writing about it," he tells us. "He knew as much metaphysics as a clever lad was likely to pick up at Edinburgh during the reign of Dugald Stewart." But it was in the region of criticism that his chief successes were won, and accordingly it is on this ground that his pretensions are most severely assailed.

"The greatest triumph that a literary critic can win is the early recognition of genius not yet appreciated by his contemporaries. The next test of his merits is his capacity for pronouncing sound judgment upon controversies which are fully before the public; and finally, no inconsiderable merit must be allowed to any critic who has a vigorous taste of his own—not hopelessly eccentric or silly—and expresses it with true literary force. If not a judge, he may in that case be a useful advocate. What can we say for Jeffrey on this understanding? Did he ever encourage a rising genius? The sole approach to such a success is an appreciative notice of Keats, which would be more satisfactory if poor

Keats had not been previously assailed by the opposition journal. The other judgments are for the most part pronounced upon men already celebrated; and the single phrase which has survived is the celebrated 'This will never do,' directed against Wordsworth's 'Excursion.' Every critic has a sacred and inalienable right to blunder at times, but Jeffrey's blundering is amazingly systematic and comprehensive. In the last of his poetical critiques (October 1829) he sums up his critical experience. He doubts whether Mrs Hemans, whom he is reviewing at the time, will be immortal. 'The tuneful quartos of Southey,' he says, 'are already little better than lumber, and the rich melodies of Keats and Shelley, and the fantastical emphasis of Wordsworth, and the plebeian pathos of Crabbe, are melting fast from the field of vision. The novels of Scott have put out his poetry. Even the splendid strains of Moore are fading into distance and dimness, except when they have been married to immortal music; and the blazing star of Byron himself is receding from its place of pride.' Who survive this general decay? Not Coleridge, who is not even mentioned; nor is Mrs Hemans secure. The two who show least marks of decay are—of all people in the world—Rogers and Campbell! It is only to be added that this summary was republished in 1843, by which time the true proportions of the great reputations of the period were becoming more obvious to the common observer. It seems almost incredible now that any sane critic should pick out Rogers and Campbell as the sole enduring relics from the age of Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Coleridge, and Byron."

This is unquestionably true; but it is perhaps scarcely generous to take from a critic who privately was, as the writer has occasion to know, in his later years at least, most generously kind in his encouragement of young and diffident authors, the credit of his praise of Keats, which threw a gleam of pleasure over the poor young poet's waning days. The insinuation is

more petty than becomes Mr Stephen, and somewhat cruel. Enough for us that Jeffrey speaks as above of the "*splendid strains of Moore*" as "even" fading when Shelley and Wordsworth had already faded. After this one scarcely wants more. There are, however, many examples of contemporary mistakes of this kind. Rogers was a social power and authority as long as he lived, with a glamour about him which, without any suggestion of meaner motive, might well have dazzled those to whom he held open the doors of paradises otherwise unattainable; and many people believed in him. Such a man dies altogether, name and fame, the moment that his windows are darkened and his door closed for ever—not by vulgar ingratitude, or as a proof of servile and interested admiration, but by stern necessity of nature. His fame was a pet and cherished yet half-conscious illusion on the part of those to whom his kindness and grateful patronage were in themselves a kind of poetry.

It is Jeffrey who is Mr Stephen's chief victim. With Sydney Smith he is much more genial, commending his Plymley Letters, and in general his originality and individual style and character, and only doubting whether he ever "really penetrates to the bottom of the question." "The only fault to be found with his statement of the case, as he saw it, is that he makes it rather too clear. The arguments are never all on one side in any political question, and the writer who sees absolutely no difficulty, suggests to a wary reader that he is ignoring something relevant," Mr Stephen says, with highly characteristic fineness of observation; and very admirable and true, if mingled with just that touch of perversity which makes the criticism all the more piquant, is his severe and dignified

reproval of the parson-critic's failure in Christian feeling, as shown in his "inexcusably bitter attacks upon the Methodists."

"He is thoroughly alarmed and disgusted by their progress. He thinks them likely to succeed, and says that if they succeed, 'happiness will be destroyed, reason degraded, and sound religion banished from the world,' and that a reign of fanaticism will be succeeded by 'a long period of the grossest immorality, atheism, and debauchery.' He is not sure that any palliation is possible, but he suggests as possible the employment of ridicule, and applies it himself most unsparingly. When the Methodists try to convert the Hindoos, he attacks them furiously for endangering the empire. They naturally reply that a Christian is bound to propagate his belief. The answer, says Smith, is short: 'It is not Christianity which is introduced (into India), but the debased nonsense and mummary of the Methodists, which has little more to do with the Christian religion than it has to do with the religion of China.' The missionaries, he says, are so foolish 'that the natives almost instinctively duck and pelt them,' as, one cannot help remembering, missionaries of an earlier Christian era had been ducked and pelted."

This, however, has not much to do with the question of the 'Edinburgh Review,' since it is not just views or right feelings—things never quite indispensable, as Mr Stephen knows, to success in literature—but literary skill and faculty that are in question. And so far as these are concerned, it is only Jeffrey who is put at the bar and examined, so to speak, on his oath. Horner is described as "a typical representative of those solid, indomitable Scotchmen whom one knows not whether to respect for their energy or to dread as the most intolerable of bores." On the whole, Mr Stephen's conclusion is, that while the Edinburgh Reviewers "enormously raised the tone

of periodical literature at the time, by opening an arena for perfectly independent discussion," they did this not with any fine or lofty impulse. They did a good thing, but not from any good motive, and worked very successfully without working very well. Perhaps a more extended examination of the facts would be necessary before coming to any decision as to the inferiority of the articles written by Jeffrey's young band of unprofessional *littérateurs*, to those which are contributed by the more strictly technical men of letters of the present time to the pages of contemporary periodicals.

We have taken up the only question treated by Mr Stephen which has not been decided by the world, and on which he sets forth an original view, still fully open to discussion—though there are many much better things in his volumes than the article on the Edinburgh Reviewers. Among these we may pause to point out the beautiful sketch of Sir Thomas Browne, which is a model of delicate drawing and fine literary perception. The old scientific humorist, so gravely dignified and circumstantial, so fantastic in his profound seriousness, with the smile almost too deep down in his eyes for common apprehension, supplies the critic with the most sympathetic of subjects; and he has done to it the fullest justice.

The questions discussed by Mr Arnold are not literary in the same sense as those of Mr Stephen. He has chosen to perpetuate his reviews, as we have said, by giving them renewed existence in this volume; but we have nothing to say to reviews. They are excellent in their proper place, but that place is not here; and their reproduction shows either a reckless confidence in the devotion of the reader,

or a sense on the part of the writer that nothing but pearls and diamonds, as in the fairy tale, ever fell from his own lips. We do not pretend to believe in Mr Matthew Arnold to this point, and we do not care for his repetitions. Even the sketch of Madame Sand and the visit which he paid her, is too unimportant for a book. It is a graceful sketch enough, but very slight and flimsy, and not teaching us much more about that remarkable personage than a newspaper interviewer might have done. George Sand, or else she is belied, was no such limpid amiability as he depicts her. We remember the tone, full of force and subdued passion, with which an old man who had known her in the bloom of life, turned from the dreadful photograph which in the Paris shop-windows represented her later years, with a vividness much different from Mr Arnold's somewhat milk-and-water reminiscences. "Elle était belle," said our friend with a kindling of old emotion under his large melancholy eyelids; and he added with that subdued passion we have referred to, the passion of old love and hatred which is the keenest of mortal sentiments, "elle est hideuse!" and so she was in the photograph, and in the mind of the old comrade who had seen her *éplucher* one heart after another, perhaps his own among them, with the composure of a goddess. To Mr Arnold she gave a cup of tea, and talked in the most admirable old-lady-like manner; and his discourse on the subject is full of that sweetness which he himself prizes so highly, and presents her in the softest ideal colours, as a lofty yet tender enthusiast without soil or stain of earth. We are very willing to allot a high place to George Sand among her contemporaries, and even among the permanent glories of

France, which in some of its phases has never had a more skilful or more graceful expositor; but we decline to accept her as a type of the purest and most elevated genius.

The strength, however, of Mr Arnold's volume is in its politico-moral discussions, with which this sketch has a certain connection; for it is democracy and equality that are his subjects—subjects that cannot be treated without large reference to France and her experiences in both questions. Mr Arnold informs us that while the bulk of opinion in England is strenuously against the principle of equality, out of England the feeling is very different, and that every Continental State which has had the chance, has held by the Code Napoléon, the system of law founded upon it, and specially intended for its promotion; while America and our own distant colonies, without any formal adherence to the regulations of that legal system, have in fact very much adopted its characteristic proviso in respect to the law of bequest. But Mr Arnold seems to have confused himself in the coils of his own argument, and to forget that a law of bequest, whatever it may be, can never be a charter of equality to a race or entire nation. It is one thing to equalise property, to prevent the maintenance or establishment of great estates, and to legislate so that every son of a rich parent shall have an equal share of his father's possessions—and quite a different thing to establish a rule of general equality extending to the moneyed and the moneyless, the rich and the poor. When he speaks of "the social system which equality creates in France," he speaks (of course) of a system which entirely leaves out all the dangerous classes, that *prolétariat* which has never anywhere launched forth such

alarming theories or taken such startling ways of showing itself as in France. *La propriété c'est le vol* is a French doctrine, and there is no small number of Frenchmen who tremble before the red and horrible ghost conjured up by these words. That there is, indeed, no country in the world where the higher classes are subject to such terrible fits of panic in respect to the lower, is evident to most people who have any personal acquaintance with them. Mr Arnold, however, writes as if there was a completeness of union between class and class on the other side of the Channel, which our aristocratical principles entirely prevented; and with curious disingenuousness contrasts the French peasant with the English middle class, as if there was no *bourgeoisie* in France, to afford a more natural balance to that difficult and unlovely portion of the community. In respect to this French peasant he quotes from Mr Hamerton words to which we could all find perfect pendants in opinions given of Scots, Irish, and Welsh peasants certainly, not to speak of the rustic inhabitants of other regions: "their manners are excellent; they have delicate perceptions, they have tact, they have a certain refinement which a brutalised peasantry could not possibly have." How often have the poor Irish in the midst of their poverty, the Highlanders deprived of every comfort, been complimented in the same way! "But you know," adds Mr Arnold, "how often it happens in England that a cultivated person talking to one of the lower class, or even of the middle class, feels, and cannot but feel, that there is somehow a wall of partition between himself and the other, that they seem to belong to two different worlds. Thoughts, feelings, perceptions, susceptibilities, language,

manners—everything is different. Whereas with a French peasant the most cultivated man may find himself in sympathy—may feel that he is talking to an equal." This sentence might stand with perfect propriety, and exactly the same meaning, if the reader substituted the words Highland gillie (for example) instead of French peasant. With many persons of that class, the highest and most cultivated personages of the realm find it perfectly pleasant to live: and it might be a curious, and, we think, more interesting question than this very halting comparison between the French and English, to ask why it is that the gentleman of aristocratical feelings, whatever may be the breadth of his political tenets, should always be able to find a resting-ground on which he can stand side by side with the humblest class, and make common cause with it; while nothing can overcome his contempt, distrust, and dislike for the intermediary grade—the so-called middle class? Is it because this middle class is perpetually pushing upward to invade the sanctuary of his gentility, a thing the peasant is unlikely to do? or is it that a man who is pure *peuple* (we use the French word, as more expressive of what we mean than the English) recovers his simple standing-ground of humanity by the absence of all possible claims to any social position which could bring him within the notice of his superiors? It would seem as if Mr Arnold, in his admiration for the peasant, had forgotten altogether that there is such a thing as an *épicier* in the French world both of life and letters; but Frenchmen in general, we think, are very well acquainted with it, and not much more respectful of it than the English gentleman is of his ideal shopkeeper, that universal pariah whom all men permit themselves to despise.

When Mr Arnold goes further, and contrasts what he calls "the goodness and agreeableness of life there" with (what he calls) the "hideousness and immense *ennui*" of life here—a life "against which the instinct of self-preservation in humanity rebels"—it is very difficult indeed to know how to classify the facts on either side, and come to any absolute certainty about them. That life may be good and agreeable to the Frenchman we are willing to allow; though it is curious to remark that, according to French writers themselves, there is nothing so killing, so oppressive, so terrible, as the *ennui* of that provincial life in France which some Englishmen hold up as delightful. But the real question for us is not the delight which the Frenchman finds in his way of living, but whether it is quite certain that it would be equally good and agreeable for all. To the mass of English men and English women a French house is the emblem of discomfort, and French habits entirely unattractive. Whatever Mr Matthew Arnold may think, we sincerely believe that to sit for hours in front of a *café*, or even under the pretty lamps and green branches of the Champs Elysées, is a kind of pleasure which very soon palls upon those who are not to the manner born, and that even the stuffiest domestic parlour would, for a continuance, be found on the whole the more amusing of the two. No doubt we should all like to have the *entrées* to those *salons*, more easily to be found in books than in real life, where the finest of French wits keep up the brilliant ball of conversation to the delight of all listeners. Yes; and so should we like to visit at those houses in London where the best of English society assembles. Very probably we should find the talk more brill-

iant, animated, and eloquent in the former, and nothing would please us more than to make the comparison; but when we descend to the lower levels—the common strain of existence which we have all some possibilities of observing—we feel great doubts as to any unspeakable advantage to be derived from a change. Indoors, a French cottage is not nearly so cheerful, so bright and cleanly to look at, as an English one. A French *appartement* is much more monotonous in its aspect, in its inevitable furniture—much less attaching and individual, as well as less comfortable, than an English house; and as for the livelier existence with which we are often vaguely tantalised, what is it?—a routine not less fixed and unalterable than that life of hideous exactness and immense *ennui* which we are said to live. If the reader who may not have the opportunity of judging for himself, will take, for instance, from the less objectionable class of French novels, his data upon which to construct a picture of French domestic life, he will find very little in it of this superlative "goodness and agreeableness" which make France so happy. He will find its main features to be in very brotherly accord with our own,—perhaps a little more society, a little more ease of visiting, a weekly reception instead of our occasional and more formal parties, a greater frequency of holiday excursions; but these compensated for by a spare internal life, a more contracted domestic centre, a keener economy descending to all the cheese-parings and candle-ends of living. As for that blessed rule of equality, there is not much sign of it in the strict exclusivism of the *faubourg*, or in that most servile snobishness which makes the French *nouveaux riches* glide out of their very name, if they can strain a *de* something or

other out of any little bit of newly-acquired property. Mr Arnold may say that these are petty details not worthy to be taken into account as against his large and blissful *tableau* of French beatitude. But the beatitude is vague, and the details are within the reach of individual eyesight. France is a noble and great country worthy of all respect and sympathy, and from whom we may learn various lessons as she from us. But it is as foolish to erect her into a model, and regard her as a Paradise, as it is to throw stones at her and call her names according to the old, neighbourly way.

A more just ground for this vaunting of France and her superiority will be found, however, in the Essay called "*Porro Unum est Necessarium*," which treats of the respective advance of France and England in what it is usual to call secondary education. Taking Mr Arnold's statistics to be beyond question, our inferiority is marked indeed; and at the present crisis of French educational affairs, the reader will find much information and interest in this paper. The French *lycée* ought to have one enormous advantage in the fact that it receives boys of all grades (save the highest and lowest), in a true and noble republicanism which cannot but benefit, one would think, the future brotherliness of Frenchmen. So the old grammar schools in their day brought young squire and yeoman and burgher's son together, and so did the parish schools of old Scotland, weaving links of tender association which were hard to break. Oddly enough, Mr Arnold takes no notice of this real chance for equality.

These national comparisons bring

us with curious appropriateness to the consideration of a small but remarkable series* of books which have attracted attention on all hands, and which in an extremely delicate and subtle way, without any obtrusion of their aim upon the world, have been quietly at work for some time with much elaboration and suggestiveness, though outwardly with a shadowy and sketchy manner, which has disarmed suspicion, on the elucidation of the American character, and its difficulties in respect to other national developments. We think we do not err in attributing this motive to the remarkable social sketches scarcely to be called tales, since they are in general the most unfinished and inconclusive of episodes, with which the circumstantial simplicity of the author's name is in a kind of humorous keeping. His "*Jr.*" at once defies and excites curiosity, just as the close adherence to fact of all his details and remorseless incompleteness of all his stories may be said to do. Nothing can be more like life than the abrupt chapter lightly begun, rising into perhaps tragical importance, then breaking off as by some sport of merely wanton fate, and coming to nothing, which is the favourite form in which he works. This is very like life, and it is very unlike art, whose mission it is to draw completeness out of the irregularities of fact, and console us with some sense of attainable coherence and symmetry in existence. It is not a vulgar necessity for a pleasurable sensation wherewith to soothe and satisfy the reader, that makes the episode of youthful love, which counts for so little often in our

* The American. By Henry James, Jr. London: Macmillan & Co.—The Europeans: a Sketch. By the Same. Macmillan & Co.—Daisy Miller, and other Stories. By the Same. Macmillan & Co.

lives, the selected portion of them for all the lighter uses of poetry and fiction. Barring life itself, which is a tragedy, and can, whatever happens, end only in a grave, the period of youth, ending legitimately in marriage, is at once the most dramatic and the most detachable of our lives. Marriage is the only absolute break in life which, though a beginning, affords at the same time an end, and reconciles all the necessities of story-telling; and no drama satisfies the mind in its natural and healthy condition which does not round itself off with something definite, a conclusion, an event. To this all languages and all times bear testimony. Nevertheless, when now and then some artist of special endowments refuses the bondage of art, abandons the necessities of dramatic completeness, and throws us into a vague eternity of wistful suggestions, such as that in which so many minds consciously float and wander—going through all the anguishes and excitements, which ought to bring a conclusion of one kind or another, but always breaking off, never attaining, beginning again in endless and listless renewal, finding every occasion *manqué*, and every new turn of the wheel as continuous yet as incoherent as before—the effect of his delicate perversity is great. It is only, however, when it is apparent that some other and perhaps greater motive than that of the simple artist actuates him, that we begin to be aware how the very fragmentary character of his work, its broken lights, its aimless passions, its catastrophes *manqués*, may be serving a better purpose than any regularity of art.

This leading purpose we find in Mr James's apparently evident intention to set forth his countrymen and countrywomen with all the singular circumstances which

affect their position and give them a special character of their own apart from other races—*aux prises* with those other races, and working out, through all the difficulties and mutual misunderstandings of the contact, the special chapter of human experience which is most attractive to them, and without which (it would seem) they do not fully esteem or understand themselves. Though the deep of human variety is infinite, and every great artist till the end of time will no doubt go on drawing new individualities out of the inexhaustible well of poetical being, yet there is no longer much room for novelty in the possible circumstances of modern life. Romantic and extraordinary adventures are scarcely prized as they used to be, and the ideal transcript of our common lives in which imagination has so long worked, and which is, we believe, its best subject, grows wearisome by much repetition. It is scarcely possible to imagine a resource more attractive to one who knows it enough to be able to use it, than the position of the American in Europe, with its mixture of knowledge and ignorance, its almost childhood yet maturity, its command of all which mere education can impart, and deficiency in that which only practical acquaintance with the older world can supply. Mr James possesses this knowledge; and though he blows no national trumpet, nor ever indulges in flights of patriotism—nay, though he makes no secret of his affection to, perhaps his preference for, the older countries of the globe—he has, or else we are greatly mistaken, a very warm and determined purpose to elevate his countrymen in the eyes of the world,—to show their side of the question, their disgust and impatience with the fictitious circumstances of our older civilisation, their indignant superiority to some of our

meanesses, their scorn of our vulgarities as opposed to their own, their wonder at our misconceptions, and sometimes proud contempt for them as unworthy even the effort of clearing up. Above all, it is in his American women that Mr James shows us this delicate impatience, disappointment, and dolorous surprise, mingled with a fresh enthusiasm for, and visionary love of, the old England which was Shakespeare's, and is theirs as well as ours, which gives bitterness to the pang of actual encounter. He has given us this picturesque and remarkable contrast under various lights. In the 'American' he has placed his ideal countryman in contact and conflict with French society and its rigid rules and impassable barriers. In the 'Europeans,' it is a pair from the Old World, whom we cannot call English, nor French, nor German, but who seem a *mélange* of all these nationalities, and of the species of adventurer as well—who are brought in contact with the equally rigid, though very different, social regulations of American life. In the "International Episode" we have a direct contrast between American and English society. These productions are all of one series, not much more than chapters in one book, fragments broken off, which may hereafter—should Mr James, as he grows older, become more affected by the ordinary desire of humanity for some conclusion and solid ground upon which to rest his foot—be supplemented and completed, for anything we can tell to the contrary. But as they stand there is no completion, no addition necessary. They are essays of national revelation—the American side of the question: how it strikes them in distinction from the less original and remarkable expression of how it strikes us. The Transatlantic writer would be

more than human if he did not, insensibly perhaps—it might even be involuntarily—give his countryman by far the best of it. His American in France is as fine a fellow as his conscience will permit him to make of an uncultivated and unenlightened, though large and manly type. Whereas his European in America is a shabby bit of an agreeable adventurer—nothing but cultivation and good manners and emptiness. In the same way the American ladies of the third sketch, bewildered and disgusted by the grudging response that is made in London to their own unbounded hospitalities on the other side, are, by the mere nature of the case, in a position curiously superior to that of the Englishmen who, for their part, had accepted every civility, it is true, by a kind of gentle compulsion, and who are really puzzled how to return these civilities, and truly ashamed of themselves for their inability to do so. Lord Lambeth looks verysmall beside Bessie Alden. It is the case throughout. We all look small beside the more magnanimous, the more liberal and noble being of our visitors. There is an unconscious elevation in their ignorance which shows against the petty background of our conventional familiarity with the *fade* routine and vulgar prejudices of our Old World life.

The 'American' was the work by which Mr James won the attention of the English public, and it is perhaps the most forcible of his productions; but it is much the least delicate, and the real perplexities of the situation, which were quite enough to tax any reasonable imagination, are complicated by an absurdly unreal bit of melodrama quite unsuited to the scene, and impossible to the author who has not any pencils at his

disposal black enough or rough enough for work of this description. The story is *naïf* in the extreme—almost what a Frenchman would call brutal in its simplicity. A rich, prosperous, ignorant, wandering American, fresh from San Francisco and potential money-making, and entirely unacquainted with fine society, finds himself in Paris; and after a few adventures to begin with—in one of which he signalises the simplicity of his uninstructedness by buying, for two thousand francs, the worthless copy of a picture in the Louvre, “for he admires the squinting Madonna of the young lady with the boyish coiffure, because he thinks the young lady herself uncommonly taking,” and giving a commission for a number of others to the same extremely improper young person—he announces, with the utmost frankness and sincerity, his intentions in a more important matter:—

“Since you ask me,” said Newman, “I will say frankly that I want extremely to marry. It is time, to begin with: before I know it, I shall be forty. And then I’m lonely, and helpless, and dull. But if I marry now, so long as I didn’t do it in hot haste when I was twenty, I must do it with my eyes open. I want to do the thing in handsome style. I not only want to make no mistakes, but I want to make a great hit. I want to take my pick. My wife must be a magnificent woman.”

“Voilà ce qui s’appelle parler!” cried Mrs Tristram.

“Oh, I have thought an immense deal about it.”

“Perhaps you think too much. The best thing is simply to fall in love.”

“When I find the woman who pleases me I shall love her enough. My wife shall be very comfortable.”

“You are superb. There’s a chance for the magnificent woman.”

“You are not fair,” Newman rejoined. “You draw a fellow out and put him off his guard, and then you laugh at him.”

“I assure you,” said Mrs Tristram,

“that I am very serious. To prove it, I will make you a proposal. Should you like me, as they say here, to marry you?”

“To hunt up a wife for me?”

“She is already found. I will bring you together.”

“Oh, come,” said Tristram, “we don’t keep a matrimonial bureau. He will think you want your commission.”

“Present me to a woman who comes up to my notions,” said Newman, “and I will marry her to-morrow.”

“You have a strange tone about it, and I don’t quite understand you. I didn’t suppose you would be so cold-blooded and calculating.”

Newman was silent a while. “Well,” he said at last, “I want a great woman. I stick to that. That’s one thing I *can* treat myself to; and if it is to be had, I mean to have it. What else have I toiled and struggled for all these years? I have succeeded, and now what am I to do with my success? To make it perfect, as I see it, there must be a beautiful woman perched on the pile like a statue on a monument. She must be as good as she is beautiful, and as clever as she is good. I can give my wife a good deal, so I am not afraid to ask a good deal myself. She shall have everything a woman can desire; I shall not even object to her being too good for me; she may be cleverer and wiser than I can understand, and I shall only be the better pleased. I want to possess, in a word, the best article in the market.”

“This is very interesting,” said Mrs Tristram. “I like to see a man know his own mind.”

“I have known mine for a long time,” Newman went on. “I made up my mind tolerably early in life that a beautiful wife was the thing best worth having here below. It is the greatest victory over circumstances. When I say beautiful, I mean beautiful in mind and in manners as well as in person. It is a thing every man has an equal right to; he may get it if he can.”

This supreme acquisition, alas! turns out not to be so easy as Mr Newman, with his pockets full of dollars and his fine ambition, thinks; but his mind is completely set upon it. “I am not

afraid of a foreigner," he says when his friend Mrs Tristram proposes to him her friend, a beautiful Parisian. "Besides, I rather like the idea of taking in Europe too. It enlarges the field of selection." In short, this offspring of the New World, without antecedents of his own, without anything but his great fortune and the qualities by which he has made it, is determined to spend this fortune of his upon the very best thing that is to be got for the money—the finest, noblest, and most beautiful that the Old World can supply. And such is his originality, his indomitable character, and the genuine feeling in him, that he actually makes a conquest of the lady herself,—a perfect creature, who is, as may be supposed, not half so charming as one of Mr James's imperfect American women. The story is very striking and amusing so long as it relates the prowess of Mr Newman, and how he conquered every obstacle in his path. We confess, however, that we can neither comprehend why Madame la Marquise and M. le Marquis de Bellegarde, the mother and elder brother of the incomparable Claire, should have sanctioned the engagement in the first place—or why, having done so, they should immediately have broken it off. Such a scandal would have been, one would think, worse even than the marriage itself. The end of the book is very melodramatic. There is a wonderful family secret, of which Newman gets possession, and by means of which he attempts to bully the old lady and her son; but he comes no speed, and after a great many striking scenes, and some very halting ones, his brief dream is over. He has fallen in love with the beautiful lady, in his way. She satisfies him entirely. She is the very crown he has desired to his fortune.

"What he felt was an intense all-consuming tenderness;" and his straightforward devotion so worked upon her, that when at last she consents to marry him, and is trying to account for the gradual growth of her satisfaction in him—"The only reason——" she says, and pauses. "Your only reason is that you love me," he murmured, with an eloquent gesture; and for want of a better reason Madame de Cintré reconciled herself to this one.

The reader understands completely Newman's absolute and intense desire to get an exquisite wife as the best thing in the world; but it is less easy to comprehend the transaction when it comes this length; and from the date of the mysterious breaking off all is incomprehensible. The story will not bear examination. But the position of the shrewd yet visionary Californian, in face of so many forces which he has no understanding of—his confidence that he can overcome the difficulties before him, and his hopeless and helpless defeat by what have seemed to him mere thin ghosts of Old World prejudice—is very ably and skilfully shown. From the moment when we find him full of admiration for the bad copy made by the young lady who was "uncommonly taking," his ignorance and self-confidence, his determination to do and have the very best of everything, and total incapacity to understand the force and meaning of all that is against him, are kept before us with the most distinct and happy reality. His ignorance is great, but he has instincts which are finer than instruction. He does not know that Mademoiselle Nioche's picture is very bad, but he knows the perfection of womanhood which he is in search of when he sees it, and is never for a moment tempted to make an ideal of the bad little painter, though he buys her pic-

ture. He thinks, on the other hand, ignorantly and foolishly, that the pride of the decayed family in the *faubourg* is one of the things which such a man as he, is bound to subdue. But though he is thus stumbling about in "a world not realised," and is altogether worsted and overthrown, he never loses our sympathy; we cannot think of him as vain or ignorant, though his ideas are so. His confidence in himself, though so unjustifiable, has always a certain nobleness in it; and he is never vulgar, nor commonplace, nor petty, but has in him a large and magnanimous nature—something princely and fine, notwithstanding the sharp limitations of his experience, his ignorance and false security. The Old World crushes the representative of the New. It erects before him cruel, incomprehensible barriers, and sucks the soul out of him, and remorselessly cuts off all his hopes. He is no match for it, though he thinks at first that he is far more than a match. This is the way in which aristocratic France deals with the American. It baffles him, confounds him, cuts off his ambition and his ideal, and makes an end of what was to have been so good—his future, the reward of his exertions, the fine dream upon which he had concentrated all his hopes.

England treats with less cruelty the American woman whom Mr James presents to us, with a touch of indulgence for the mother country, as the representative of the New World in London. We find Miss Bessie Alden first at home in the multitudinous life of an American watering-place, where the whole population sits out in breezy verandas (called piazzas in native phraseology) within sight of the sea, in white dresses, and talks. To this society arrive two Englishmen, Lord Lambeth and Mr Percy Beau-

mont, who are made very much of by the pretty wife and beautiful sister of the New York man of business, to whom they have been introduced. Bessie Alden, the sister, is a Boston young lady, not accustomed to the gaiety of the New-Yorkers, and much impressed by her first encounter with an Englishman. The picture is very pretty and charming. The girl looks at the handsome, somewhat dull, very ignorant, and perfectly good-tempered and good-mannered Englishman with a little awe. To her he is a type of that cultivated and beautiful Old World, full of associations, full of poetry, about which she has been reading all her days, and to see which is, as she says, the dream of her life. She finds in him everything that is most attractive to the imagination and most unlike what Americans have. He is a nobleman, a lord, a duke's son, a complete impersonation of the strange, fascinating, and so different life of the old country. But though she is infinitely attracted by the phenomena of his existence, Miss Bessie is never fascinated by the individual, whom Mr James has made, we are obliged to say, a somewhat silly and stupid young man, though he is very carefully attired in the fragmentary talk and anxious avoidance of all pretence at anything better, which is characteristic of Englishmen. The situation will remind the reader of that audacious and brilliant study of American manners to which we may be forgiven a passing reference—the *Tender Recollections* of Miss Irene Macgillicuddy. One could almost fancy that it was in a little natural national irritation against that revelation of the New York young lady and her mode of treating the wandering Englishmen that Mr James undertook his version of his countrywoman. Yet the picture of the life of Newport,

the talk and the sociability, is characteristic enough, very odd to English eyes, and perceptibly the same, though taken from a less malicious point of view, as the society of Irene Macgillicuddy. It is, however, when his gay and elegant and beautifully-dressed and pretty-mannered Americans come to London that Mr James's intention becomes apparent. We are doubtful whether his indictment is most against the British aristocracy for not rushing to throw itself at the feet of Mrs Westgate and Miss Alden, or against Mrs Westgate for expecting this rush. Both are involved in the pretty and lively talk of the lady, who, conscious of having taken so many Englishmen to her heart in America, is delicately and gaily bitter as to the absence of all return on their part when she appears in their kingdom. Lord Lambeth is most anxious to return their civilities, and devotes himself to their service; but he cannot make his duchess-mother equally eager, and the whole brilliant little episode collapses in the inferred refusal by Bessie of her noble lover, which is caused, we are not sure whether by her indifference to himself, or by her indignant perception of the manner in which her proud innocence is regarded by all around him. Thus it all comes to nothing once more; and the pretty Americans go forth "to spread their conquests further," into the gayer French world, where they apparently expect a better reception, but where, as Mr James has already shown us, still more tragic and incomprehensible hostilities lurk.

Thus we are made to see the generous open-heartedness of American society, and the mean jealousy and unresponsiveness of our own. But do not let us say our own—for Mrs Westgate is charmingly naïve in her determination to see no

society worthy of her which does not include all the dukes and duchesses, personages whom most of us scarcely take into account at all as indispensable to enjoyment.

"I don't want any superior second-rate society," (said this charming woman); "I want the society I have been accustomed to. The first time I came to London I went out to dine. After dinner, in the drawing-room I had some conversation with an old lady. . . . I forget what she talked about; but she presently said, in allusion to something we were discussing, 'Oh, you know the aristocracy do so-and-so—but in one's own class of life it is very different.' In one's own class of life! What is a poor unprotected American woman to do in a country where she is liable to have that sort of thing said to her!"

This is perhaps the most delicate and refined snobbishness that was ever put upon record, and Mr James evidently knows the ways of thinking of his people. Mr Matthew Arnold, on his side, would no doubt be edified to see how little his favourite class of gentlemen, who are "not of the nobility, but with the accomplishments and tastes of an upper class," satisfy the requirements of the wives of New York merchants. These ladies take all the conventionalities of society *au grand sérieux*. They are wounded by the fact that Her Grace must walk before them out of a room; yet they feel themselves not in the society to which they have been accustomed when they are not with the duchesses. The picture is very amusing and characteristic, and full of candour. Miss Alden, however, who is from Boston, is very desirous of carrying with her into the best society another class not always found there—"the eminent people—the authors and artists—the clever people." "We hold them in great honour; they go to the best dinner-parties,"

she says, with delightful simplicity. The young Bostonian is not less conscious of her superiority to "the distinguished people" than is the Marquis of Lambeth; but her sense of her power to do them honour is much more lively. Altogether there have been few things more piquant in recent literature than this contrast and contact of the Old World and the New. The American in France had much the worse of the conflict. The *Americaine* in England carries off the honours, though they are somewhat barren.

Want of space prevents us from noticing the other works of the series. The "Europeans," as we have said, are very shabby representatives of the Old World in the New—not at all on the same level as Newman and the Newport ladies; and nobody on this side of the Atlantic will grudge Mr James his easy victory over them, which is very shadowy and indistinct at the same time. We never really know what they want, to start with—and we are left in some uncertainty as to what they obtain. The story of Daisy Miller has a different *motif* from the others. It is a purely American picture; and the strange, beautiful, dainty, innocent, and very foolish little American girl, with her ignorant defiance of all rules, is criticised and condemned by Americans abroad, not by the society native to the places which she scandalises. The wonderful mother, and still more wonderful little boy, are figures which must be quite familiar to every frequenter of foreign hotels; but we never met anything so daring as Daisy herself. The end of the story is unnecessarily tragic. The poor little pretty trifier might surely have been shipped home to Schenectady, and let off with her life. There is one other little sketch in Mr James's last volume which is wonderfully

pretty and pathetic, and which he calls "Four Meetings." It is the story of a little New England governess, whose "dream of her life" it has been, as with Bessie Alden, to go to "Europe," and who saves up her money with a kind of passion for this end. She comes to Europe, meets, and is immediately victimised by, an American cousin in France, to whom her money is needful, and goes back again penniless but uncomplaining, having spent but thirteen hours in that Europe for which she had so longed. It is cruel. One instinctively puts one's hand in one's pocket, wondering would it not have been possible somehow to make up Miss Caroline Spencer's loss? But it is the author's *rôle* to represent himself as entirely passive in such matters; and, on the other hand, it would have spoiled the story. Mr James cannot refrain from another covert fling at the Old World, by representing his delicate little martyr as saddled in perpetuity with a vulgar Frenchwoman, the supposed widow of the cousin who robbed her; but the picture of the heroine is very touching in its faint colours and delicate outline, and gives us a pang of sympathy, even though we feel that the pain is unnecessary, and that surely the American lady at the hotel must have managed some way of making it up to the sufferer.

We recommend to romancers of all nations, who may happen to have the necessary knowledge, this mode of setting forth the mutual grievances of their countries. We have ourselves in England discussed America at great length by means of wandering novelists; but nobody before Mr James has hit upon this delicate and subtle way of showing how superior the one race is to the other, while saying something not ill-natured, at the same time, of the other too.

THE MANDOLINATA.

THE night is still, the windows are open,
The air with odours is sweet ;
Hark ! some one is humming the Mandolinata
Along the open street.
The Mandolinata ! Ah me ! as I hear it,
Before me you seem to rise
From the other world, with your gentle presence,
Your tender and smiling eyes.

How we jested together, and hummed together
That old and threadbare song,
With forced intonations and quaint affectations,
That ended in laughter long !
How oft in the morning beneath your window
I framed to it bantering words,
And heard from within your sweet voice answer
With a flute-tone like a bird's !

And you opened your shutters and sang, " Good morning,
O Troubadour, gallant and gay !"
And I chanted, " O lovely and lazy lady,
I die of this long delay !
Oh, hasten, hasten ! " " I'm coming, I'm coming,
Thy lady is coming to thee ;"
And then you drew back in your chamber laughing—
Oh, who were so foolish as we ?

Ah me ! that vision comes up before me ;
How vivid and young and gay !
Ere Death like a sudden blast blew on you,
And swept life's blossoms away.
Buoyant of spirit, and glad and happy,
And gentle of thought and heart ;
Ah ! who would believe you were mortally wounded,
So bravely you played your part ?

We veiled our fears and our apprehensions,
With hopes that were all in vain ;
It was only a sudden cough and spasm
Betrayed the inward pain.
In the midst of our jesting and merry laughter,
We turned aside to sigh,
Looked out of the window, and all the landscape
Grew dim to the brimming eye.

And at last, one pleasant summer morning,
 When roses were all in bloom,
 Death gently came with the wandering breezes
 To bear your spirit home.
 A smile on your lips—a tender greeting—
 And all that was once so gay
 Was still and calm, with a perfect sadness,
 And you had passed away.

W. W. S.

THROUGH the casement the wind is moaning,
 On the pane the ivy crawls,
 The fire is faded to ashes,
 And the black brand, broken, falls.

The voices are gone, but I linger,
 And silence is over all;
 Where once there was music and laughter
 Stands Death in the empty hall.

There is only a dead rose lying,
 Faded and crushed on the floor;
 And a harp whose strings are broken,
 That Love will play no more.

Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine

W. W. S.

THE AFFGHAN PEACE AND OUR NEW FRONTIER.

AFTER the great strain of the Russo-Turkish difficulty, and the moral victory which her Majesty's Government won for European law, by a courage and patience scarcely paralleled in diplomacy, the Affghan peace seems a comparatively minor triumph. Yet in the influence which it promises to exercise upon Asiatic politics, and through these upon the peace of Europe—in its bearing upon the Eastern interests of Great Britain, and in its relation to the future of all those countries whose politics are intersected by one or other side of the Eastern Question—the Treaty of Gandamak is scarcely of less importance than the Treaty of Berlin. To say that it has secured us "peace with hon-

our" is to say very little. The country could have expected nothing less from the present Administration. But the Treaty of Gandamak provides us with more than an honourable and equitable outcome from a very serious difficulty. It has solved the one great problem with which the ablest Indian statesmen of the generation since the Crimean war have shrunk from dealing. It has fixed definite limits to the indefinite aims of Russia in the direction of our Indian possessions. It has given the States contiguous to India an unmistakable intimation of our intention to jealously guard the possessions that we have won. And last, but not least, it has transformed the Affghan country from the

"buffer" which it was assumed to be under the "neutral zone" theory—a buffer which, as it turned out, could be used in two ways—into a really strong buttress of the Indian empire.

In the history of the Central Asian Question, the Treaty of Gandamak ends a most momentous epoch which begins with Prince Gortschakoff's Circular of November 1864. That manifesto plainly foreshadowed, even before British politicians could bring themselves to believe it possible, an ultimate collision of territorial interests between Russia and the Indian empire. Our own Eastern experience warned us that the "imperious necessity," which, as Prince Gortschakoff admitted, had forced the Russian outposts down to the Jaxartes, could not be arrested by the limitations which the Czar's Government then laid down, not with too great strictness, perhaps, to its Central Asian administrators. We have never put too severe a construction upon Russia's successive aggressions in the Turkistan Khanates, notwithstanding the apparent bad faith which she kept with the Powers of Europe in her encroachments. She could no more have paused at the Jaxartes than the East India Company could have pulled up at the Karumnassa; and her assurances of finality were subject to the overruling of events just as ours had been. Even her advances to the late Ameer, Shere Ali Khan, made though they were under false pretences, were not without a colour of excuse. The opposition between Great Britain and Russia on the subject of the Porte's dependencies, and the not remote possibility of the two Powers being brought into relations of active hostility, certainly presented a strong temptation, if it did not altogether justify the Czar's Ministers in seeking to annoy her

Majesty's Government on the Indian frontier. If we take into account the relations of the two Powers little more than a year ago, the Russian intrigue to incite Shere Ali against his British alliance seems as natural a piece of policy as were Lord Lytton's endeavours by means of special missions to recall the late Ameer to his duty. It would savour of political puritanism to judge the conduct of Russia in the Affghan *imbroglio* by a lofty moral standard. We are quite willing to concede that she acted as seemed best for her own interests, and that her circumstances warranted her in doing so. The essence of her offence consisted in the fact that all the while she was playing her game with the late Ameer, she was intentionally deceiving the European Powers as to the facts as well as the objects of her diplomacy. On the other hand, what the Indian Government did was done in the light of day, and under the eyes of the States of both Europe and Asia. We never for a moment sought to dissemble either the aims of our policy or the self-interest which actuated them.

For the Ameer Shere Ali Khan there was far less excuse. It is true that he had his own grievances against the Indian Government, but these were presumably sunk when he consented to become its beneficiary. His original antipathy to the English had been aggravated by the cold way in which Lord Lawrence's government stood aloof while he was struggling with his brothers, now for the throne, now for life and liberty. But Lord Mayo's kindness had to all appearance erased those recollections from Shere Ali's memory. Then, when Lord Northbrook's indifference to the Ameer's appeals for assurance of support against the Russian advance had the unfortunate effect of casting Shere Ali adrift from the British

alliance, Lord Lytton was again willing to make amends in the hour of need. In accepting our assistance at a time when it was essential to the establishment of his power, he had also pledged himself to our interest. His position towards us has been summed up with such justice and clearness by Lord Cranbrook in his famous despatch, that we cannot do better than quote his lordship's words :—

“This conduct on the part of the Ameer was wholly without justification. He was aware, from various communications addressed to him by your Excellency's predecessors, that the Russian Government had given assurances to the Government of her Majesty to regard his territories as completely beyond its sphere of action. He was equally aware that the whole policy of the British Government since his accession to the throne had been to strengthen his power and authority, and to protect him from foreign aggression, although the methods adopted for doing so may not have at all times accorded with his Highness's own views. He had received from the British Government evidence of goodwill, manifested by large gifts of money and arms, as well as by its successful efforts in obtaining from the Czar's Government its formal recognition of a fixed boundary, agreeable to himself, between his kingdom and the neighbouring Khanates ; his subjects had been allowed to pass freely throughout India, to the great benefit of the trade and commerce of his country ; in no single instance has the Ameer himself, or any of his people, been treated unjustly or inhospitably within British jurisdiction. By every bond of international courtesy, as well as by the treaty engagement of 1855 existing between the two countries, binding him to be the friend of our friends and the enemy of our enemies, the Ameer was bound to a line of conduct the reverse of that which he adopted.”

So far, then, as the Ameer himself was concerned, he deserved nothing but retribution at the hands of the British Government.

His refusal to receive a British envoy at the very time when he was entertaining a Russian embassy at Cabul, was a direct declaration of hostility which no Government could overlook. All fair means were adopted to bring the Ameer to a sense of his duty, and when these failed we had no recourse except to declare war.

We expressed our regret at the commencement of the campaign that the Affghan war should have to be undertaken at a time when a combination of circumstances—the distaste for fighting springing out of the recent struggle in Europe, the general depression of trade, and the embarrassed condition of the Indian revenues—pointed strongly to the prudence of a peaceful policy. But as we never undertake expeditions for purposes of pure aggression, and only in defence of our interests when assailed, it follows that the timing of our wars does not rest with us. England's necessity is her rival's opportunity, and the season we are best prepared for war is the one when we are most likely to be let alone. The fact that we undertook the Affghan war at all at a time when both Government and the country were so strongly disposed for peace, was the best proof of its urgent necessity. We saw Affghanistan melting from our grasp, and with it the last chance of securing an efficient frontier for the protection of north-western India ; and it would have been criminal folly in any Government to stand tamely by so long as it had a shot in the locker to fire.

We had two definite objects to gain by the war. In the first place, we had to punish the Ameer for his faithlessness, and to vindicate the respect for British treaties in the sight of our other Asiatic allies ; and secondly, we had to provide ourselves with a new north-western

frontier for India adapted to the altered aspect of Central Asian affairs. The Ameer Shere Ali's infatuation had cancelled the whole of our securities for the friendship and even the neutrality of the Affghan nation. Russia's "imperious necessity" had proved what might have been all along anticipated, that she would make a diversion to our disadvantage in India whenever we had occasion to check her in Europe. Lord Beaconsfield's remark that we were seeking for a "scientific frontier" has been employed as a sneering catchword in party speeches, and yet the want of such a frontier was the danger which the rupture with Affghanistan had brought most forcibly home to us. Hitherto the north-west of India had had a frontier but in name, tenable only while we were at peace with the country beyond. The line ran through a country that has at all times been a debatable land—now Hindoo now Mussulman, now Sikh now Pathan—and ever the possession of the strongest. It formed no line of defence, and it afforded us no position from which we could exercise influence when our interests were at stake in High Asia. As General Reynell Taylor said in 1868, "We are unfortunately down-stairs and out in the street, and must ascend narrow and difficult flights of steps, with no good landing-places on them, in order to get even up to the first floor." If we had an enemy to meet in the country beyond, the prospect always confronted us of a desperate struggle to make in forcing our way through the passes; and when we had succeeded in doing so with great exertions, and probably with considerable loss, we were likely to find the main body of the enemy strongly posted and waiting our onset with serene confidence. We must not rashly infer from the half-hearted

opposition offered by the Affghan clans on the present occasion that it is necessarily an easy achievement to occupy the passes. There is experience enough of previous campaigns in Affghanistan to correct such a rash assumption, even if the possibility of having to encounter a stronger and better organised force than the levies of Dost Mohammed is left out of sight. The politicians who have talked so confidently of defending India from the line of the Indus have always looked rather to the improbability of an invasion than to the practicability of making a successful stand there. Nothing can be more decisive than Lord Napier of Magdala's opinion on this subject. "A mountain-chain," says his lordship, "that can be pierced in so many places, is no security if you hide behind it. India has been often entered through her mountain-barrier, which was never defended. India waited to fight the battle in her own plains and invariably lost." The whole experience of Indian history warns us that the command of the passes is the key of the position in the plains. As Evan Dhu very pithily observes in 'Waverley,' "Even a haggis, God bless her, can charge down-hill!"

The first object of the expedition was easily achieved. Shere Ali paid the full penalty of his faithlessness without any inconvenience on our part of passing judgment on his offence or of settling the nature of the punishment to be awarded him. This was a great piece of good fortune. Had the Ameer, instead of fleeing from his capital and dying a natural death, continued to hold Cabul, the difficulties in the way of concluding peace must necessarily have been multiplied. Apart altogether from our latest experience of Shere Ali's restless and unstable temperament, our knowledge of the career and char-

acter of the late Ameer must have prevented us from regarding him as a suitable party to a treaty. And if he had resisted to the last, as seemed at one time not improbable, and yielded only when the Bala Hissar had fallen into the hands of the British, we would have had a disagreeable charge on our hands—a prisoner whom it would have been impolitic to coerce and dangerous to set at large. As it turned out, Shere Ali's death afforded his country a happy issue out of the troubles in which reckless intriguing had involved it, and closed a career which had been as unhappy as eventful. His whole life had been spent in plotting and bloodshed. As the favourite son and destined successor of Dost Mohammed, he was an object of hatred to his numerous other brothers, all of whom at one time or other had done their best to compass his death. He was scarcely seated on the throne when he was driven into exile, and had to struggle for years, with almost no resources, to keep a power together sufficient to maintain his personal liberty. He had to take part in scenes of domestic discord and bloodshed such as we read of only in Greek tragedy; he had seen his favourite son killed by his own brother, while he himself was far from clear of the guilt of fratricide. He was disappointed in his family; he was disappointed in the expectations which he had formed of British support; and when the hope of his old age, his favourite son, Abdulla Jan, died, his mind, which had before given proofs of madness, became thoroughly reckless. As matters have turned out, we can afford to feel a sentiment of pity for the late Ameer; while we rejoice that the ungrateful task of punishing him for violating our alliance has been providentially spared us.

With the new Ameer, Yakoob Khan, our relations have all along been different. Ever since the Umballa Durbar, the British Government has had Yakoob's interest warmly at heart. Lord Mayo sought by both his personal influence and public authority to secure to Yakoob Khan the recognition of his rights as Shere Ali's lawful successor; and the young prince has all along been aware that his best hope of succeeding to the throne rested on the assistance of the Government of India. When, in the end of 1873, the Ameer formally notified to the Government of India his nomination of Abdulla Jan as his heir-apparent, Lord Northbrook's administration saw with sincere concern the difficult future that was before Yakoob Khan. According to our lines of policy, as then laid down, Government was powerless to move in the matter; and any attempt to intervene on Yakoob's behalf would only have served to embitter still further the feud between him and his father. When Yakoob was arrested at Cabul in October 1874, Lord Northbrook's Government, roused for the occasion from its usual indifference to Afghan affairs, addressed a message to the Ameer on the subject; and there can be little doubt that the question of the succession was one of the chief considerations which prompted the Marquis of Salisbury's despatch, pointing out the necessity of establishing better sources of information regarding Afghan affairs, and proposing the deputation of a British agency to Herat. The fact that the first grievance alleged by the late Ameer against the Government of India was the communications which he had received from Lord Northbrook on behalf of his son in 1874, is in itself a clear proof that Yakoob was

regarded by the Court of Cabul as the favourite of the British. When the rupture took place between us and the Ameer, it would have been unbecoming in our Government to have taken any steps to set the son against the father; but all along it has been apparent that the only hope for the maintenance of a native dynasty in Affghanistan in friendly alliance with British interests centred in the hope of the accession of Yakoob Khan to power, before his father's reckless policy had ended in reducing the country to the footing of Kokand or Bokhara, or any of the other vassal states of Russia.

In the present campaign, our policy towards Yakoob Khan has been characterised by all the consideration due to his equivocal position. He himself was in no way to blame for the rupture, and yet his father had left him to bear the brunt of our hostility. His position at Cabul was as difficult a one as any ruler could be placed in. He could depend on the allegiance of only a portion of the chiefs; for the partisans of the late heir-apparent mustered strong in the capital, and there were other pretenders to the throne, each of whom had his own band of adherents. All were ready to turn Yakoob's movements to his disadvantage whatever step he took. Had he at once thrown himself into the arms of the British, he would have been held up as a traitor to his country and a trafficker with infidels; and all the national and religious feelings of the Affghan tribes would have been roused against him. On the other hand, he had good reason to fear that by a too obstinate resistance he might forfeit the consideration which he had reason to hope for from the invading army. By a ready response to the British overtures, he ran a serious risk of internal rebellion; by hazardous resistance he exposed himself to the certain anger of the British

Government; and by a vacillating policy, he placed himself in danger of falling between two stools. That Yakoob Khan has safely extricated himself from all these difficulties, betokens that adversity and imprisonment have not turned the edge of that diplomatic ingenuity which distinguished his government of Herat in earlier years, and which later on restored the fortunes of his father, when these were standing at their lowest ebb.

It is important to have a clear idea of Yakoob Khan's position at Cabul, if we are to form a just estimate of the course which we have followed in Affghanistan since Shere Ali's flight from the capital and death. When the news of the latter event reached us, a certain class of politicians would have had the campaign wound up. The Ameer was punished, the position for the scientific frontier was in our grasp, and what more would we have? Fortunately such shallow counsels go but a short way with the present Government. We had, unfortunately, been compelled to derange the government of the country, and justice to the Affghan nation, not less than the interests of our foreign policy, demanded that we should leave peace and order behind us. This was only to be accomplished by patience and moderation. No doubt we could have brought the Affghan difficulty to a more speedy termination by marching on Cabul as soon as the passes were open, and by placing Yakoob Khan or any other ruler that we chose to set up upon the throne, under a salute from the British batteries. But does any one believe that such a procedure would have laid the foundation of a stable monarchy? Our wisest course was to wait. Time was given not only to Yakoob Khan but to the chiefs round about him, to satisfy themselves that no power could stand in Cabul except

supported by a British alliance, and that only by British assistance could the integrity of the Affghan dominions be preserved. So long as there was a likelihood of this fact being realised, it was clearly our policy to allow the Affghan chiefs to feel their true position, and to spare them all humiliation that could be avoided. Were the present Government, as its enemies allege, a Government that delights in imperial displays and military triumphs, surely here was a chance not to be neglected, with Afghanistan lying prostrate at our feet. The spirit of moderation which has guided our policy all through this campaign needs, however, no other vindication than the ample success with which the issue has now crowned it.

The Treaty of Gandamak on the part of the Affghans is an engagement into which the nation has freely entered, guided by its own sense of the course which was best for the future welfare of the country. The contract on our side is marked by generous concessions and by the minimum of exactions that the state of affairs admits of on our part. So little has the treaty the aspect of conditions extorted from a conquered Power, that it only formulates the terms offered by Lord Lytton through Atta Mahomed Khan, our agent at Cabul, in October 1876. The chief difference between the two documents is, that while Lord Lytton, three years ago, would have been satisfied with the establishment of a British agency at Herat, and the opening up of the country, in a general way, to Englishmen, provision is now made for the posting of a British Resident to the Affghan capital. The only mark which the altered condition of affairs and the British invasion of the country leave upon the treaty is the assignment of the districts presently occupied by our forces to the Gov-

ernment of India, and that not in sovereignty but in trust for the Affghan crown. The treaty expressly provides that the Kurrum, Pishin, and Sibi valleys are to remain as districts assigned to the British Government, the Ameer receiving the surplus revenue after payment of the administrative expenses. Practically, therefore, these districts will stand to us in the same relations as the Berars do at the present moment, which, though nominally belonging to the Nizam, are to all practical intents as much British territory as are the adjoining central provinces. A necessary adjunct to this stipulation is the right which we have reserved to establish a complete control over the Khyber and Michni passes, and over the tribes who inhabit these defiles and the adjoining territories. In other words, we relieve the Ameer of the entire responsibility of the troublesome Pathan country between India and Afghanistan proper, which has been a continual source of weakness to the Affghan Government, which has been of more loss than profit to its revenue, and which has hitherto prevented it from consolidating its power, where consolidation was most needed, in the direction of the Persian and Oxus frontiers.

As for Yakoob Khan himself, if he has had to part with any prerogatives to which the Affghan rulers have hitherto clung, he is not without compensating advantages. He is to have an annual allowance of £60,000 a-year, "contingent upon the strict execution of the treaty." Disposed as we are to give the new Ameer credit for good intentions and for sufficient prudence to recognise what is most serviceable to his own interests, we are not the less pleased that the Government of India has taken ample security for any possible change in his temperament. The appointment of a British Resi-

dent at Cabul introduces a new and most important element in Afghan affairs. To the Government of India the Resident will afford security that the Ameer is governing his country in a wise and beneficent spirit, that he is keeping aloof from intrigues, and that he is fulfilling the conditions attached to the payment of his subsidy. Afghan news-writers are by no means scrupulous about the truth when party ends are to be served; but there is no possibility of Yakoob Khan's conduct being misrepresented to the Government of India so long as he has a British Resident at Cabul to take into his confidence. A British Resident, too, will prove a bulwark of the Ameer's throne. His presence in Cabul will be a visible representation to the Afghan clans of the assistance of the British Government, and a sure deterrent to rebellious feelings. Alone in his capital, even with his subsidy, Yakoob Khan would still occupy but an unsafe position as soon as the other chiefs of Dost Mohammed's family found time and means to draw to a head. With a British Resident at his back who could telegraph to Peshawur or the nearest frontier post for assistance, the prospects of insurrection in Afghanistan are reduced to a minimum.

The question, however, which chiefly interests us, is the extent of the new responsibilities which we are to assume under the treaty, and the assurances which it affords us of peace on our north-western frontier. Rating the concessions made by the Ameer at their very lowest value, we find that the mere territorial changes, the extension of our outposts beyond the passes, and the command of all the great highways leading from Central Asia into India, is a vast enhancement of the advantages of our military position. We have now at least the line of the mountains secured as an out-

work; and military critics can no longer reproach us that we are imitating the supineness of the Austrians in not defending the line of the Bohemian mountains—a mistake which was expiated by the disaster of Sadowa—or that of the Ottomans in not turning the line of the Balkans to account. The trans-Indus spurs of the Hindoo Kush and the Suleiman range now afford us a frontier, which, to quote Major-General E. B. Hamley—whose views on this question, expressed at the Royal United Service Institution last December, have had full effect given to them in the new arrangements—is “of all barriers, next perhaps to a great desert, the boundary that gives most security.” Judging by General Hamley's tests, we may conclude that the mountain-barrier and the new line of outposts which will be thrown outside of it will effectually remove all those apprehensions which no intelligent critic interested in the future of British rule in India could lightly dismiss.

We question whether the home public has as yet fully realised the relations in which under the Treaty of Gandamak the Government of India will now stand towards Afghanistan. In its characteristic features the treaty itself is the nearest approach that has been made to Lord Wellesley's system of Subsidiary Alliances, in the present generation of Eastern statesmen. This we conceive to be a high compliment; for it was Lord Wellesley's policy which first laid the firm foundations of British empire in India, and extended the aims of the Government in that country beyond the narrow groove to which the Court of Directors would fain have confined it. But it was a policy that entailed vast responsibilities to which no Governor-General could ever prescribe definite limits, and which required a

strong hand and a vigorous purpose, such as the great majority of our Indian rulers have supplied, to work it satisfactorily. So it will be with this Affghan treaty. It is best to look facts firmly in the face, as unquestionably the Government has done; and it is with no intention to depreciate the advantages which we may secure by our new alliance with the Ameer Yakoub Khan, or to alarm the public about the obligations which will devolve upon us, that we proceed to consider the possible effects which the treaty is likely to produce upon the Central Asian policy of the Indian Government.

The first and most important responsibility which we have now undertaken is our assumption of the entire control of the Ameer's foreign relations. All the foreign intercourse of the Affghan Government is to be conducted under British advice, and any private negotiations entered into by the Ameer will constitute an infraction of the treaty. This is a wide extension of British responsibility, carrying us at once from the Indus to the Oxus, and from the Khyber and the Suleiman to the borders of Persia. The Affghan frontier is disproportionately long for the territory which it embraces, and at almost every turning it impinges upon some state with which the Ameer has had uncertain or hostile relations. Starting from the Khyber it trends round the north-western boundary of the Maharajah of Cashmere's dominions, between whom and the Affghans there is a coldness dating from the days of the Sikh monarchy. It then passes by the interesting country of Kaffiristan, with which we shall now probably soon be able to make acquaintance, on to the confines of Kashgar, which it will be the object of the Government of India to bind up in a union of interests

with the Ameer's dominions. Our aim now must be to make Eastern Turkistan an outwork of Cashmere, just as we have made Affghanistan a screen for the Punjab. Affghan territory then stretches a narrow tongue into Eastern Turkistan, including the Badakshan and Wakpan chieftaincies, over which the Cabul Government in its difficulties has been able to exercise almost no control, and which have of late considered themselves independent of the Ameer. Beyond the Oxus, its northern boundary, it has Bokhara, a vassal state of Russia, for a neighbour—a kingdom which has old historical claims upon the Ameer's territories of Balkh, that have never been allowed to drop altogether out of sight. It then crosses the skirts of the Kara Turkomans and the Merv country until it reaches the Persian frontier, a section that is of particular interest from the probabilities of a Russian advance in that quarter. The Persian portion of the boundary is the safest that Affghanistan possesses besides its British frontier. Its limits are generally clearly defined, and where disputes have taken place, facts have generally shown them to have been brought about more by Affghan troublesomeness than through encroachments by the Shah's subjects. On the south the Ameer's country borders Beluchistan and our protected country of Khelat, where no serious difficulties are likely to occur. It may be supposed, then, how great a task we have in hand when we have undertaken to regulate the Ameer's intercourse with so many different neighbours, and to see his Government safely out of any controversies in which these may engage it.

We have promised to support the Ameer against foreign aggression, but the treaty makes no mention of aiding him against internal insurrection. That, however, goes with-

out saying. A strong administration and a peaceable country is the only basis on which the Government of India could safely manage the Ameer's foreign relations. And here the advantage of a British Resident in Cabul will be specially felt. His advice will assist the Ameer in introducing regular systems of justice and revenue into his dominions. He will mediate between the pretensions of the semi-independent chiefs and the rights of the Ameer's sovereignty. He will use the influence of the Indian Government to counsel the Ameer to moderate measures when there is discontent among his subjects, and will strengthen his hands when it is necessary to use force to bring malcontents to a sense of their duty. The treaty tacitly assumes that the Ameer will be guided in his administration by the counsels of the Resident; and as we are accordingly responsible for any evil consequences which may flow to him from following such advice, we are of course bound to assist him in making good his authority against all unlawful opposition on the part of his subjects. We may accordingly conclude, that though no such support is specified in the treaty, an obligation rests with the Government of India to protect Yakoob Khan against internal rebellion as well as foreign aggression, so long as he continues faithful to the spirit of the new alliance.

The first duty, then, which we ought to urge upon the Affghan Government, is the consolidation of its authority within our own territories. Hitherto the position of the Cabul Government, between its troublesome Pathan frontier on the one side and its not less rebellious provinces beyond the Hindoo Kush, has been that of a force between two fires. If the Pathans refused to pay revenue, or the Candahar sirdars were mutinous,

the Meers in Balkh and Badakshan were certain to seize the opportunity of the Ameer's attention being occupied on his eastern border for defying his authority. In the same way, if the Cabul Government was engaged in dealings with refractory chiefs beyond the Paropamisus, the Pathans were sure to seize the occasion of rising. To simultaneously settle both frontiers would have taken a larger force than the Affghan revenues could afford; and the only way in which both Balkh and the Pathan country have been together kept in order has been by Dost Mohammed's Machiavellian policy of pitting chief against chief. Now that Yakoob Khan has been rid of the Pathan tribes, and that their country from a source of danger will be converted into a support to his power, he will have ample opportunity of turning his attention to the northern part of his kingdom. And certainly Balkh and the Merv boundary never stood more in need of looking after. During the Affghan troubles of the last twelve months the Cabul Government has been powerless to make its authority felt there. At best its claims to the allegiance of the greater chiefs towards the Oxus rest solely upon the power of being able to compel their obedience. Bokhara, too, as we have already mentioned, affects to have a right to Balkh-Turkistan; and is ever ready to stir up sedition against the Ameer of Affghanistan's government, and to encourage his subjects to revolt. It is only thirty years since the provinces of Balkh, Khulum, and Kunduz came into the possession of the Affghans; and though both Russia and England have formally acknowledged them to be Affghan territory, there is still a considerable section of the people susceptible to Bokhariot influence. Then the states of Maimuna, Sir-i-pul, and Andekhoi,

occupying the extreme north-western portion of Affghanistan, are all more or less disaffected. Maimuna, especially, has always resisted the dominion of Cabul; and its Meer was the only one of the Balkh chiefs who, at the death of Dost Mohammed, openly refused to acknowledge his new suzerain. Flanking, as these states do, the angle of the Affghan dominions that lies towards Merv, it is of the first importance that Yakoob Khan's authority over them should be firmly established, and a check given to the Bokhara leanings of their chiefs. In 1870 Russia reluctantly consented to recognise Maimuna and the other two states as Affghan territory, provided Merv and the Turkoman districts were left outside of the frontier line. This concession, however, was made in the hope that we would in return allow Wakhan and Badakshan to be left outside the Affghan boundary—an arrangement which Lord Granville, however, refused to sanction. With Wakhan and Badakshan there is a prospect of still greater difficulty than the smaller north-western chieftaincies are likely to be able to cause. The strength of the Meers of both these states, the recognition which their independence has received from Russian and Bokhariot emissaries, and the immunity which they have enjoyed from Affghan interference during the civil wars, will in all probability render them extremely reluctant to acknowledge the Ameer of Cabul as their sovereign. These two chiefships occupy the tongue of territory which Affghanistan thrusts out between the Hindoo Kush and the Upper Oxus, and they cross the highways from Bokhara and Kokand to India by the Chitral and Gilgit valleys. The settlement of these territories is therefore to us a matter of even greater importance than the subjection of the smaller chieftaincies to-

wards Merv; and it will be our immediate interest to induce Yakoob Khan to vindicate his suzerainty. It is indisputable that Dost Mohammed held Badakshan as a state tributary to himself; and if his successors have not succeeded always in enforcing this responsibility, it was because their strength had been wasted in civil contentions. The Wakhan chief to whom Lord Northbrook's blundering courtesy was one of Shere Ali's principal grounds of offence against the Government of India, lay still farther away from the Affghan garrisons, and consequently enjoyed a still greater measure of independence. It was with great reluctance that Prince Gortschakoff gave up these states to the Affghan Government, and more, as he said, to secure a settlement of the Affghan frontier question than in consequence of any right which had been made out on the Ameer's behalf. However, it is important to remember that in its despatch of 19th January 1873, the Russian Cabinet did give its "full and entire consent" to the states of Wakhan and Badakshan being demarcated inside the Affghan frontier; and this concession we are now bound to regard as giving an unchallengeable title to Ameer Yakoob Khan's suzerainty. To bring the interests of all these chiefs into harmony with the aims of the Cabul Government; to secure their submission to the Ameer, and at the same time to save for them the exercise of their just rights within their own domains; to provide for them places in the Cabul *durbar*, and posts in the administration under the new *régime* worthy of their positions,—will exercise the skill of the ablest "political" that the Government of India can select for the first occupant of the Cabul Residency.

The settlement of all these vassal states, though ostensibly a matter

of internal policy, really involves foreign relations of a very complicated kind, which the Government of India itself now undertakes to settle directly. And in so doing we shall probably find ourselves at a disadvantage from our uncertainty of the exact position which the St Petersburg Cabinet now takes up under the recently altered condition of affairs. Do all the understandings and comprises which we arrived at from 1870 to 1873, with so much trouble and so little result, about the Affghan frontier and the respective limitations of British and Russian interests in Central Asia, still hold good? Considering that British influence has been formally stretched out almost to the Russian border, we can hardly suppose that Russia will rest content without some definite assurances about the limitations which we propose to ourselves for our Affghan policy. The news of the Affghan Treaty would seem to have intensified the paralytic condition of the Russian Foreign Office; and we have as yet had no satisfactory information as to how the Treaty of Gandamak is viewed by the St Petersburg Government.

The abrupt—if we were talking of any other Power less dear to the English Opposition, we would have said sneaking—manner in which Russia drew back from the Affghan commotion which she herself had excited, renders it unlikely that she will be very forward in acceding to any terms that will mark her acceptance of the altered condition of events in Central Asia. Russia not less than Britain has to rely upon *prestige* in her Asiatic policy, and the Russian *prestige* has certainly received a rude shock in Affghanistan. It is little that her desertion of Shere Ali in the crisis into which she had persuaded the Ameer to place himself and his kingdom, will prevent the Affghans in all

time coming from placing reliance on her honour. But how will the Khanates, the states which, in the belief of Russia's invincibility, have hitherto accepted Russia's supremacy view her questionable conduct? The old illusion that British power shrank from placing itself in opposition to the Czar, and would hide itself behind its Indian frontier, rather than hazard a quarrel on the onward progress of Russia, must now be thoroughly dissipated. The power of the Russian Government and the comparative impotency and timidity of the British in India used to be a theme of constant discussion in the *durbars* of Central Asia in the days when "Masterly Inactivity" was the watchword of our Foreign Policy. The proof that Russia's vassal Khanates have now received of the fallacy on which this comparison was founded, cannot fail to have its effect. The check which Russian policy has sustained will come home with much force to Kokand, Bokhara, and Khiva. For our own part we are inclined to regret the unfortunate position in which Russia's Central Asian policy is now situated. It is too late to undo the measures to which, step by step during the last fifteen years, she has committed herself. We have no interest now in wishing her power beyond the Oxus to be weakened; we have rather to congratulate ourselves upon the prospect of having one strong and responsible Power to deal with instead of a number of impracticable and untrustworthy Mohammedan despots. Under these circumstances it would be worth some sacrifice on our part to come to a liberal and harmonious understanding with Russia about our respective aims in Central Asia. We are quite ready to admit that she may have some cause of complaint on her side. The indifference with which the Liberal Gov-

ernment professed to view her extension of territory in Asia, its carelessness of Affghan interests, its refusal to the Ameer to give him an assurance of support in response to his representations of the danger of Russian aggression, and its reluctance to acknowledge the existence of a definite policy upon the Central Asian question, may very possibly have misled Russia as to the real intentions of England, while they unquestionably afforded her substantial encouragement to persevere in her encroachments. Our object now should be rather to initiate a frank understanding with Russia as to the aims of our respective policies, to secure her agreement to definite boundaries to the spheres of influence of both Powers, and to form, so far as is possible, a union of interests with her in the future development of Asia. Such an arrangement would not be too dearly purchased at the cost of a "golden bridge," by which Russia might be permitted to fall back from the position of humiliation which she presently occupies in the eyes of the Central Asian states.

After the soreness springing from her recent check has been got over, we have every reason to believe that Russia's power in Asia will benefit from the responsibilities which we have now assumed in Afghanistan. Hitherto she has been able to see no clear goal to her southward progress. We have now placed before her a barrier which she knows quite well to be the Rubicon of war, and which she will not pass until she is prepared to fight. Even with such a contingency in view, we are ready to welcome the change. Hitherto Russia's advances have all been made under the cover of night, and concealed by denials, until she had secured a position from which she could not be asked to withdraw. Now, whatever steps she takes to-

wards our frontier must be under our immediate observation, and accompanied by such clear and explicit explanations as will satisfy us of her intentions. That she will ultimately be borne up to the Affghan frontier at no distant date we cannot permit ourselves to doubt; and our Government must be prepared for such a contingency. We see no cause for additional apprehension in this prospect. We have always held that we have less to fear with Russia immediately on the other side of the border of our Affghan protectorate than with a debatable land between us, which she could make a source of annoyance to our Government without exposing herself directly to our resentment,—always a favourite tactic of Russian diplomacy. Disposed as we are to hope for good faith and friendly alliance from the Czar's Government, now that we are almost within hands'-shake of each other in Asia, we must always be prepared to meet her man to man upon the frontier. Russia is never so virtuous in her intentions, so pacific in her policy, as when she has to deal with a Power that is quite as able and willing to fight as she is herself. By enabling the Ameer Yakoub Khan to present a strong front to the Russians on his northern and north-western border, supplemented as it would necessarily be under the treaty in time of need by British troops, we shall give to Russia and her Central Asian feudatories the best earnest of our desire to avoid any collision with them. It will also have to be our first care that the Ameer's authority is so strengthened on these borders that he will be able to restrain his subjects from giving cause of offence to any of the tribes beyond the frontier in which Russia or her feudatories may claim to have an interest.

Notwithstanding the wide-stretch-

ing responsibilities which it must impose upon us, and the many new difficulties with which we may now be called upon to deal directly, we accept the Treaty of Gandamak as the first great step towards the settlement of the Central Asian question. A most desirable complement to it would be a thorough understanding with Russia upon the same basis. Whether in her present mood this is to be attained or not cannot be said with certainty; but in either case, our duty is alike clear, to lose no time in commencing the execution of the treaty. Already preparations are making for the return march of the expeditionary troops to India; and before the passes are again closed, we trust we shall have a British Resident at Cabul able to communicate by telegraph with the Foreign Office at Calcutta.

In estimating our exact relationship to Afghanistan, it would be affectation to disguise the fact that a Subsidiary Alliance like the Treaty of Gandamak at once brings the Ameer and his country under the paramount power of India. It is exactly the same sort of treaty as first brought the Nizam and all the other great feudatories in India under our supremacy. In this case the essential difference is, that while we have imposed a tribute in the majority of other instances, in this case we make our feudatory a stipendiary. Under the Subsidiary Alliance system we have strictly recognised the internal independence of the chiefs, so long as their administration was in harmony with the principles we prescribed to them; but when they proved impracticable, we have never hesitated to make such arrangements as were most conducive to the welfare of their subjects, and the interests of the country at large. And we must keep in view that the Affghan Subsidiary Alliance can be worked only on the

same principles. The Ameer Yakkoob Khan and his successors after him will have their independence jealously conserved to them so long as they act up to the terms of the treaty, and in keeping with the spirit of the paramount power. But should they evince a disposition of faithlessness, or give way to the arbitrary temperament which has characterised previous sovereigns of their house, it would be foolish to suppose that the Government of India would throw up Afghanistan in disgust. The working of the Subsidiary Alliances in India supplies plenty of precedents to enable us to conjecture what course it would be incumbent upon Government to adopt under such circumstances.

The Government of India has not less reason to be satisfied with the conduct of the Affghan expedition than with its results. The promptness with which the Military Department was able to put the force into the field; the discipline and bravery of the troops, native as well as European—their endurance, as tested by the severe Affghan winter, and their steadiness in action—all redounded highly to the credit of the military administration. There are probably no just grounds for instituting a comparison, but one is naturally inclined to contrast the vigorous management of the Affghan expedition with the dilatory course of the campaign in Zululand. If complaints are launched against the cost of our military establishment in India, it is satisfactory to know that *there* at least we get the worth of our money in efficiency. The Government is also to be congratulated upon the feelings of loyalty displayed by so many of its princes, who have warmly supported the expedition. The spontaneous loyalty with which the Nizam, Scindiah, the Maharajah of Cashmere, and others of the Sikh chiefs sought

to assist the expedition, is a convincing proof, if any were needed, of how acceptable to their feelings are the new ties by which the chiefs of India were recently bound to the Crown. Some twelve years back, when Lord Lawrence's Government instituted an inquiry as to whether the princes and chiefs of India (*sua si bona norint*) were satisfied with our rule, many of the most experienced Indian diplomats expressed themselves doubtful as to the disposition which the feudatories would manifest should difficulties with Central Asia embarrass us. Surely, then, we are justified in attributing some portion of the happily altered feeling to the more genial policy which Lord Lytton was privileged to inaugurate at Delhi on New-Year's Day of 1877.

We cannot leave the subject of the treaty without paying a tribute due to the foresight of one of the ablest officers ever employed in Affghan affairs, whose views deserved a better fate than to be pigeon-holed in a *secrétariat*. In 1868, Brigadier (now Major-General) Sir H. B. Lumsden, in his official remarks upon Sir Henry Rawlinson's Minute, suggested as a basis of arrangement with the Ameer proposals almost identical with those which now form the Treaty of Gandamak. General Lumsden then urged that a *durbar* on the largest scale should be held at Kurrum, and that when once face to face with the Ameer, we should propose to give him substantial assistance in men and munition, and to guarantee him in the government of Cabul, provided that an envoy with a suitable staff and escort was permitted to reside at his court, and that he made over to us the valleys of Kurrum and Khost for an annual payment of a lac of rupees. The time was certainly ripe for such a proposal, for Shere Ali was then in great straits, having only just recovered his capi-

tal, and both Azim Khan and Abdul Ruhman were still prepared to contest the kingdom with him. But such energetic counsel was useless to the do-nothing Government of the day; and it is only when we look back upon the events of the last eleven years, and discover what we might have been saved, had we done then what we have had to do now, that we can do justice to General Lumsden's political sagacity.

The present time is not favourable for the consideration of any questions that will entail an additional burden on the Indian revenues, but the establishment of our influence in Afghanistan and the settlement of the Central Asian question are matters too weighty to be trammelled by the principles of ordinary economy. Our *doctrinaire* theorists invariably forget that our position in India depends upon our ability to hold it; and that our military and political expenditure is the last quarter to which retrenchment can safely be applied. No economy can be more false than that which would seek to pare away the very keystone upon which the arch of our Indian empire rests. That there is great room for retrenchment in the internal administration of India is manifest. The task of introducing civilisation into the country at high pressure, and of forcing progress to come into an annual report that would take decades to be attained by a process of natural development, cannot be performed except at an immense outlay. This is the chief cause of our present Indian embarrassments, and it is one that can be easily remedied. We have launched out upon great public works in a reckless and prodigal fashion, without waiting to satisfy ourselves whether they were actually wanted, far less whether there was a reasonable prospect of their paying. We have given the natives institutions far in advance

of their wants in the trust that they would speedily rise to the level which we had prepared for them. If the Indian Treasury is in difficulties it certainly cannot be said that they have been brought about by the selfishness of the Imperial Government. No one who knows aught of the conditions of Indian rule will ever for a moment believe that our grasp of the country is to be strengthened by colleges and canals. The first care of any prudent Government in such a position as that of India ought to be to secure itself against all probable dangers—external as well as internal. Until this has been first provided for, the rest of our expenditure is but a speculative investment; for we can have no assurance that our power will be permitted to survive to reap the interest of our outlay. The additional expenditure which the Indian revenues will now be called upon to bear, is in every respect a proper burden, for we must hold that the welfare of India is immediately bound up in the security of our rule. The measures which the Government is now taking to reduce its internal expenditure and to devise a cheaper mode of conducting the administration will show, we are convinced, that India, far from being in the bankrupt condition which sensational writers have sought to make out from insufficient data, is perfectly able to maintain a strong military government, as well as to spend upon the material progress of her populations all that their needs properly require.

The last mails from India bring news of the appointment of a Commission to inquire into the whole system of army organisation. The measure would be most opportune, if we could feel certain that the Commission would not be influenced by the spirit of financial panic that seems just now to per-

vade all the circles of Indian administration. The first subject which the committee will have to consider is, how to get more men for less money, for our present Indian garrison in peace time will be quite inadequate for the efficient discharge of our new territorial responsibilities. The internal working of the Indian system is also to be carefully considered, and we trust that the relations between the Staff Corps and regimental duty will be thoroughly probed. To India the Staff Corps has been a fatally expensive experiment, and its advantages have been much less than apparent. It has drawn away the best officers from regimental duty; it has as often as not filled regimental appointments with men whose long career in civil employment had quite unfitted them for command; it has saddled the three Presidencies each with a costly army of field-officers; and it has, generally speaking, broken up, or interfered with, that uniform working of the military machine without which army organisation can never be effective. The question of the abolition of the commands-in-chief in Bombay and Madras is also expected to come before the Commission. Retrenchment may very properly be attempted in that direction, although we doubt whether it will be found practicable to abolish these appointments so long as the civil administrations of the Presidencies retain the rank of independent governments, corresponding directly with the Secretary of State. We cannot agree with the criticisms which some of the home journals have passed upon the working of the transport and commissariat departments in the Affghan war, or concede that reform in these branches of the service is more urgently needed than the improvement of our regimental organisation.

Considering the difficulties of the country and the rigour of an Affghan winter, we are convinced that both the commissariat and transport departments deserve fair credit for their exertions, considering the short notice upon which they took the field; at all events, the working of these departments have been signally successful compared with that of those in the Zulu war. The fact is that the British commissariat can never be brought up to the level of the same department in other armies, where the principle prevails of taking what you want and paying what you choose, provided you think of paying anything at all.

If any benefit can be derived from the inquiries of this Commission, it ought certainly to be the extrication of the regimental system from the Staff Corps. The relationship of the two is unanimously condemned by all military critics, and even its authors have not now the courage to say a word in its defence. Next to the Staff Corps anomaly, the want of a permanent European force like the East India Company's fine old local regiments, is perhaps the defect most felt in our system.

We notice with regret an attack that is being made upon the pension-list of the rank and file of the Indian army. In no direction could parsimony be directed with less benefit to the Government and more discontent to the masses. The Indian pensioner is one of the firmest links that binds the native population to the Government of India. In his little village his easy circumstances and independent position are an appreciable proof of the munificence of the State and a stimulus to others to enter our service, while the pensioner himself is in many cases a missionary of loyalty and order. To interfere with

the present system would be to sow widespread dissatisfaction, and to deprive the Government of the advantages which it at present reaps in return for its bounty.

We cannot turn away from the Affghan Treaty without a reference to its connection with the general spirit of the Foreign Policy of the Government. We have no difficulty in perceiving that it is the same principles which had scarcely a year ago secured for Europe a new lease of peace out of the Berlin Treaty, that have now again saved us from a collision that must have shaken the whole of Western Asia. If in the latter country we have been compelled to have recourse to war to secure a lasting basis of peace, we may at least take credit for the success of our efforts to restrict the area of our operations, and to secure our object in Affghanistan with as little injury to its unfortunate population as was compatible with the presence in their country of a hostile force. The causes of quarrel with the advancing power of Russia have been cleared away, our objects in Affghanistan frankly declared, and a definite barrier set up against our neighbour's encroachment. Contrast these with the results which must have flowed from the *laissez faire* policy which was so doggedly insisted on by the Opposition towards the end of last year. With a Russian envoy at Cabul, Russian garrisons in Balkh and Herat, and Russian influence looking down upon us from the Khyber, the Ministry could scarcely have gone to the country with much prospect of carrying back the confidence of the constituencies.

This lofty maintenance of English interests and English honour, in the face of all obstacles, and wherever assailed, has been held up to odium by the Opposition as "Im-

prophecies regarding the results of the Government's action in Eastern Europe and Asia during the last three or four years, and to carefully mark the measure in which each of his forecasts has been fulfilled. Such a "recess study" is about as profitable an occupation as the right honourable gentleman could apply himself to, and its lessons might exercise a salutary influence upon the remainder of his career in opposition. The other prominent critic of the Government's Foreign Policy has taken refuge in the American backwoods, and abandoned his country to a hardened and reprobate Conservatism. There was no member of the late Government who could assail our course of action with regard to the Ameer Shere Ali Khan with a worse grace than the Duke of Argyll; for it is notorious that he shuffled with the subject the whole time that he was at the India Office. In the *Affghan Blue-book*, which we have reason to believe forms a very complete collection of all the official correspondence between the Home and India Governments, we find only one despatch and two telegrams from the Duke of Argyll—and all these seek to throw obstacles in the way of the proposals which Lord Mayo and Lord Northbrook had respectively suggested for increasing our good understanding with the Ameer. Had his Grace then shown the same perseverance in seeking to effect a settlement of the Affghan question that

he has since exhibited in attempting to incriminate his successors, he might have been spared the trouble of writing a two-volume political treatise, of condensing that again into a still more unreadable one-volume tract, of rehearsing an epitome of the whole production to the reluctant peers—who thus were made to do ample penance for the neglect with which they had previously treated his Grace's publications—and of finally republishing his speech in a small pamphlet. However, the Duke has gone to America, his 'Eastern Question' will find its way to the butterman, and the Foreign Policy of the Government is standing out the more clearly for all the attacks that party and personal jealousy have been able to direct against it. We trust that before the time arrives when the Government will have to give its account to the country, it will be able to announce a settlement of the Zulu war as satisfactory as the treaties of Berlin and Gandamak. In the meantime we must take the deeds of the Government for its will; and in the ample preparations that have been made for the subjection of Cetywayo, and in the despatch of Sir Garnet Wolseley for the scene of action, we have a pledge that the Ministry do not intend the difficulty in South Africa to be dealt with in any less thorough manner than the more serious troubles in the east of Europe and in Central Asia.

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GODFREY'S WHITE QUEEN.

PART I.—CHAPTER I.

It was a warm sunny morning in July—one of those brilliant days in which it seems that mother Nature has no sympathy for her children if they are in trouble—a little group of three persons stood together on the platform of Lealstone station waiting for a train, postponing their last good-bye to the last moment. Colonel Fitzjames was leaving his orphan sister, Audine, whom he had hardly ever quitted before, for a visit of uncertain length to property which he possessed in Australia.

"You will write to me regularly, George," Audine repeated over and over again, holding her brother's arm with both her cold little hands. "You will write long letters; you will remember how hungry I shall be for all the smallest details."

"I promise, my darling. You shall have a noble budget of news by every mail. Now, Audine, will you sit down for one moment? I want to say one word more to Mrs Neville."

Audine quitted his arm, and sat

down on one of the benches in the station. The poor girl had to clasp her hands very tightly together, and to struggle hard to suppress the choking tears that she was determined not to shed.

Colonel Fitzjames and Mrs Neville paced up and down side by side. She was a tall handsome woman of about forty-five. She had formerly been the dear friend of Audine's mother, and to her care Colonel Fitzjames had committed his dearly-loved sister.

"Remember," he said, in a voice that had something of sternness in it—"remember what a great trust I have put in you. Audine is only just eighteen, and so young and childish for her age; let me find her on my return as young, and happy, and free from sad experiences as I leave her, and I shall owe you a debt of gratitude that I shall never be able to repay."

"You may trust me, George," said Mrs Neville, very earnestly.

"I do trust you," he repeated; "I am trusting you with the dear-

est thing I possess on earth,—for my sake, for her mother's sake, take care of my little sister."

The arrival bell rang loudly; the train was within a mile; Audine sprang from her seat and ran to her brother.

"Let me stay with you now, George," she said; and he saw how white she was, and how gallantly she was fighting with her tears.

"My brave little Audine, keep up heart; I shall expect to see such beautiful paintings when I come home, and to hear all sorts of new songs. You must work very hard, and write very often, and you have no idea how quickly the time will pass."

"Oh, there is the train!" cried Audine, with an irrepressible sob. "O George, George!"

"Now, dear, give me my umbrella—there; now the rug. Good-bye, darling. God bless you, and take care of you."

He gently drew himself away from her clinging hands, and got into the carriage.

"Good-bye, Mrs Neville. I need not say, take care of her. Good-bye, my dear friend."

The train began to move,—it could spare but one short moment at so small a station as Lealstone. Audine lifted her face from her friend's shoulder, where she had hidden it, and met her brother's last look with a brave smile, which looked very wistful and piteous on her little pale face.

She waved her handkerchief till the train was out of sight, and the circling clouds of dust had settled to rest again, and then Mrs Neville led her away, and comforted and petted her till she had cried until she could cry no more.

The village of Lealstone was situated in a densely populated manufacturing district. The surrounding country had once been beauti-

ful, but was blighted and darkened by smoke. The features were fine,—broad sweeps of valley, a good horizon, line rising upon line of low hills. The eye ranged over a wide extent of country, and the dim colouring had a peculiar beauty of its own. Earth and sky, when smoke-laden, assumed one uniform grey tint, which the sun pierced with rays of brilliant white; touching on far-distant, many-windowed factories, they gleamed suddenly, flashing like polished steel; and the tall chimneys would stand out in strong relief on a background of mist and smoke, shining with silvery light,—an ever-varying, shifting landscape of grey *chiaro-oscuro*.

On every side rose the hum of busy life—the rattling of machinery, the roar of a thousand whirling wheels.

Lealstone Hall—Colonel Fitzjames's house—was about a mile from the village. It was an old red-brick house, standing in a fine park; but the situation had been ill chosen, and was a serious drawback to the beauty of the place. The house stood on the extreme edge of the park in the midst of a large garden; and the tall walls of this garden alone separated it from one of the wildest and most desolate tracts of moor in the black country. A gate led out into the road across the moor, but was not often used by the family.

Here in Lealstone Audine had passed all her young and uneventful life. Lady Mabel Fitzjames, her mother, had died when she was born, so she had never known a mother's love. Her brother George, who was twelve years older than herself, had felt the loss with a passion of grief even beyond his years, and had found his best comfort in his helpless little baby sister. When Audine was about eleven years old, her father also died; and

her brother George, now twenty-two years old, was left her sole guardian. He fulfilled the task nobly. His little sister had become the dearest object of his affections, and she grew up so much petted and beloved, that had she had a less sweet disposition she must have been spoilt.

Audine's childhood was of necessity a somewhat solitary one, and for want of more substantial play-fellows, she peopled the world around her with bright creatures of her own imagination. For some years her mind was satisfied with fairy-lore;—gnomes, undines, and elves were to her living and exquisite realities. When she was fifteen her brother led her into a new and still more enchanting world, through the medium of the *Waverley Novels*, and thenceforth her dreams were of deeds of chivalry and glory, of splintering lances and hard-fought battles. She became an ardent Jacobite, an eager Tory. Being so good a lover, she was a good hater, and her very cheek would turn pale at the mention of William of Orange.

The quality of self-sacrifice was one that especially commended itself to Audine's young and generous nature. She longed to be able to do something for those she loved; to suffer for them; to give up some happiness for their sake. She idealised Flora MacIvor, and shed many a bitter tear over her fate, all the more that that heroine's position with regard to her brother seemed to bear some resemblance to her own.

Colonel Fitzjames's departure for Australia was the first real sorrow

of Audine's young life. He left her most unwillingly, but it was inevitable. He possessed estates of considerable value in the colonies, and had some reason to doubt the fidelity of his agent. Finding himself obliged to leave her, Colonel Fitzjames bethought him of Lady Mabel's old friend, Mrs Neville. She was a widow, and had one son—a sculptor. She was rich, but lived a very lonely life in the south of England, her son being nearly always in London working at his profession. Mrs Neville and her son Godfrey, had often stayed for weeks together at Lealstone when the Fitzjameses were little more than children, and Godfrey had been the only playmate of nearly her own age that Audine had ever known. He was about three years older than herself.

Mrs Neville accepted Colonel Fitzjames's invitation to break up her lonely home and come to Lealstone with great pleasure. It was an understood thing that Godfrey also was to consider it his home whenever he wished to leave London. And the lonely woman felt that a year spent thus with Audine would be one of extreme happiness.

Colonel Fitzjames felt sure of her tender affection for his young sister, and though his opinion of her judgment was not so high as his mother's had been, he had implicit faith in her kindness and every trust in Audine herself. He had not realised that, however childish and young she might be, his little sister had reached the age of eighteen.

CHAPTER II.

The first two or three months of Colonel Fitzjames's absence passed with a rapidity which Audine

would never have believed to be possible.

One evening she and Mrs Neville

were sitting in the large morning-room on the ground-floor which they generally inhabited; the high French windows which opened on to the garden were set wide open, and a sweet smell of roses and mignonette was wafted in on the warm air. The evening was so lovely that Audine longed to be out of doors; but there was something in the manner of her friend which made her restrain her wish and say instead, "Are you not well to-night, aunt Mary?" for so she was wont to call her.

Mrs Neville answered that she was well, that nothing ailed her; and Audine asked no more. She sat by the empty fireplace, her knitting-pins idle in her lap, her eyes fixed and troubled.

Audine glanced out of the window at the large harvest moon slowly rising through the thick group of trees at the end of the garden. She heard the softly rustling ivy, and she longed to go and gather the great crimson roses that were nodding outside, but an instinct told her that her friend's thoughts were set to a minor key to-night, and she strove to tune herself to them.

"I am a very dull companion, Audine," said Mrs Neville so suddenly that Audine started and looked up, smiling brightly. The old lady rose and walked restlessly to the window.

"Something has troubled you," said Audine, following her and leaning her cheek on Mrs Neville's shoulder. "Trouble is a heavier burden inside than out, my old nurse Burnie says. Tell me your trouble, aunt Mary, if you can."

"Why should I sadden you, child—you who have never known a sorrow in your life?"

"Till George went away."

"I meant a real living sorrow.

George will be back very soon. What is one year at your age?"

"Never mind my sorrows, aunt Mary, let me try and lighten yours."

"I think—yes, I think I will talk to you about it; and yet I don't know."

"Sit down, aunt Mary, there by the window-seat, and I will sit on this stool at your feet. Now, tell me all about it."

"You are very young, child, to be my confidant."

"I am older in mind than in years."

"No, no, do not say that; your youth is too precious a gift to be parted with soon, and your little mind is well matched with your little body. What are you doing?"

"Gathering a rose to smell while you talk to me."

Mrs Neville for a moment leant her head sorrowfully on her hand. That poor weary woman longed and pined for a confidant. She was not made to live alone. With more than a woman's weakness she had leant on her husband—with more than a woman's helplessness she had faced the anxious care of an only son; and now she longed intensely for some loving ear into which to pour her anxieties, some voice to give strength to her own indecision of conduct.

The temptation was too great. The loving sympathetic child could comfort her, and could surely gain no harm from what she had to confide. So she bent down and kissed the little expectant face, and began her story with a long sigh.

"My trouble is all about Godfrey, Audine; he gives me a great deal of anxiety."

"Is he ill?"

"No, not ill; quite well in health. It is rather for his mind that I fear. You know that my

dear husband died when you were little more than a baby, Audine; he and your father were very dear friends, and were often together. We were very happy, when a strange sad trouble came over us: he became subject to optical delusions. From that time we knew no resting-place: we wandered from one doctor to another; were sent sometimes to Germany, Italy, or France—sometimes to the north of Scotland, even to Norway and Sweden, in quest of health. It was of no avail. It was only for a short time before his death that the trouble passed away, and he died in a great and blessed peace."

Audine pressed her hand.

"His greatest comfort and help was our boy. He would tell him the strange things he saw; and while holding his little hand, would describe how they faded away, till the child grew so excited that I often feared for his health. With his last breath my dear husband bade me be gentle, and fan and foster the spark of genius he saw in the boy. He had a great genius himself, but it was undeveloped—the effect, he always declared, of an unsympathising home.

"When he died, Godfrey became the sole joy and resource of my life. They wished me to send him to school——"

"Who did, aunt Mary? Could they be so cruel?"

"His uncles. They meant well, dear; and God knows it might have been better for him if I had allowed them to have their way. But Godfrey was all in all to me, and his father's words were always ringing in my ears, that his own genius had been cramped by harsh treatment when young; so I resisted their wishes, and he was brought up at home. I threw myself into all his pursuits, hoping that each one would prove the right one for

the development of his powers. He never knew control or contradiction, only encouragement in his noble aspirations; for they always were noble, however vague and unformed. The tutor I engaged for him first was a learned and accomplished man, but too old to sympathise with his youth, so I changed to a younger man—a German—with whom he used to work more willingly; and the two together roused each other to enthusiasm over their studies. Well, it was desultory training, and his uncles have blamed me bitterly for it; and I fear that the punishment is coming on me now."

"When did he take to sculpture?"

"When he was about fifteen he became passionately fond of modelling, and Roger Girwood, who then worked in a neighbouring town, used to come over and give him lessons."

"Who is Roger Girwood?"

"He was a stone-cutter to whom my husband lent money once in a moment of urgent necessity. The man had a great deal of talent; he raised himself by hard work, and is now owner of an important stone-yard in London, where he sculpts urns and devices for tombs, and carves inscriptions. He has a large empty room at the back of his yard which Godfrey has hired and converted into a studio. He lodges in the house when he is working, and old Mrs Parsons, Roger Girwood's housekeeper, takes good care of them both."

"Ah, I had heard of Mr Neville's studio, and often wished that I could see it."

"When Godfrey had fairly settled to his work my mind felt wonderfully at ease. He had found out the bent of his genius, and his desultory training would have done him no harm; now I felt that I had

done him service in encouraging and increasing by my sympathy that perpetual craving for an ideal perfection which only the real genius can ever feel. Alas! Audine, if I had listened to advice! No, I will not say that; I obeyed my husband; and the boy was his—his and mine; we were responsible to no one but God.

"I was much disturbed before long by Godfrey's dissatisfaction with all he produced. After months of hard work once he allowed me to see a beautiful statue on the eve of completion. No doubt there were faults, for he had not then mastered all the technical difficulties, but still it was a lovely thing. I was very proud of it, and boastingly described it to my brothers-in-law, who (for they are kindly at heart) were delighted at the news, and went to the studio to see it. Alas! Godfrey had destroyed it the night before,—it was reduced to a mass of broken marble."

The tears stood in Mrs Neville's eyes.

"If you knew how I cried over those broken pieces," she said.

"What a pity!" cried Audine. "But after all, is it not a grand thing never to be satisfied with the work of one's own hands?"

"Is it, my dear? I don't know. My hopes rose again when Godfrey began a group: it was life-size, and represented Circe and the swine. We went to Rome to work at it, and he bought the wild boars shot in the Campagna and sold in a small shop close to the Pantheon. One of these was a very fine one, and he kept it till there were great complaints in the house."

"But why?"

"It had such a strong smell, my dear, and it had to be thrown away. He tried to get one like it; but some were too ugly, and some too fat. One day we were quite be-

sieged in our apartment by people from the Piazza Navona bringing wild boars in their arms.

"Circe was getting on very well, when Godfrey was seized with a fit of disgust, and would have destroyed it also, had not one of his artist friends, an Italian named Castaletti, entreated to be allowed to have it. Godfrey gave it to him at once; and he has since made use of the design to produce a group that has been very much admired."

"What a shame!"

"And it has been the same with all that my poor boy does. Ever dissatisfied, ever aspiring, everything he produces disgusts and discourages him. One day you will see his studio full of studies,—bold outlines in chalk, full of genius, modelled hands or feet, sometimes a giant drawing of an eye or a mouth—nothing finished, no design carried out. His studio is full of flowers. They alone realise his ideal of perfection; and they are changed every day, that he may not see them fade. I have sometimes regretted that he has no motive for work—that he is not a poor, struggling artist; for then I know that he would do great things."

"Still, dear aunt Mary, I see nothing in all this but the impatience of genius."

Mrs Neville shook her head.

"But surely," Audine went on—"surely this is better than the extreme vanity and self-conceit of half the great men one hears about."

"I am afraid, Audine, that I am too unhappy about it to think that."

"Dear aunt Mary, if I have rightly understood his character from your description, it seems to me to be an excess of all that is noble and aspiring."

"I will read you the letter I have received from him to-day. It

is so strange that it greatly alarms me." Mrs Neville took a letter from her pocket, and began to read :—

"You have often complained, my dearest mother, of the overwhelming difficulty I have ever had in overcoming my extreme distaste for the works of my own hands; and you have always seemed almost unable to take in the fact that I had set a standard to myself which I must reach. I have felt like the man who at every step across the river destroyed the stepping-stone on which his foot had rested, that there might be no retreat. I may be altogether successful. If I am not, my work will die with me. I will not be a Failure! In almost every subject I have met with defeat in my search after perfection. You know that my first acquaintance with the sculptures of Greece carried me away, and induced me to think that human effort could go no further. You know how, by degrees, it came upon me that these glorious works were the ideals of other men, no creatures of my own hand, children of my own brain. My Ceres was destroyed by an impulse which sent that stepping-stone far into the river of the past. Others followed. For a while I came to earth from Olympia, and sought perfection in the human eye and the varying grace of a human expression. Varying! There is the difficulty. There can be no variation in perfection. Perfection is passionless. In sunny Italy they told me another tale. They bade me take for my theme the spotless Virgin—the blessed Mary. But here my hand faltered, my pencil refused to design. Holy, beautiful, innocent, and chosen as none other has been chosen, were it not profane to call by her name an ideal the result only of my own teeming

brain? No. My perfection includes elements that are not of earth. She is not a woman, but a combination of attributes; and that Virgin Mother is too truly womanly to confound with this strange conception of mine."

Mrs Neville let the letter fall, and looked at Audine.

"Is this not strange!" she said. "He has never told me so clearly before the curious object of his ambition."

"It is strange," repeated Audine, and her brows were knit, trying to take in the meaning.

Mrs Neville took up the letter, and read on :—

"I have been reading lately a great many novels. They all tell the same story,—that should a man fall in love, at once his ideal is realised. I should have liked much to fall in love; but I fear the rough awakening, the finding out that the ideal is only a pretty woman after all. This is all nonsense, dear mother; but it leads me to the news of my letter. She is coming! she is coming!—this perfection I have craved for so long. I work night and day, and every hour adds to her grace and her loveliness. I am already working on the marble; the clay has been cast aside. Her face is completed now, and, looking into it, I can see realised the ideas to which I have so long striven to give expression. I gaze till she almost seems to breathe. Out of the marble grave in which she has lain enshrined my lady awakes and comes,—to-day, a delicate hand and arm, over which the soft folds of her tunic hang. She is very lovely now, and I cannot cease working till she is perfect indeed. So do not come and see me, dear mother, for I could not attend to you now. I can think of nothing

but the realisation of my wildest dreams."

"Surely this is the best of news," cried Audine. "This statue must be very beautiful to satisfy even him, dear aunt Mary,—are you not glad?"

"Glad! ought I to be glad? Yes, I suppose I am glad; but somehow I feel a sort of horror come over me at the idea of this piece of snow-white perfection!"

"The White Queen! he must call her the White Queen!" cried

Audine enthusiastically. That evening when Audine's blue eyes had closed on this busy world, and her senses had left earth, and were wandering in a sweet fairy world, Mrs Neville, with a careworn brow and clasped hands, paced up and down her room.

"I have not spared either myself or him,—I have told her all," she muttered. "If she learn to love him, if she prove his salvation, I shall have done my duty. I have told her all—she has had her warning—little Audine! pretty Audine!

CHAPTER III.

Audine had not completed her toilet the next morning, when the door of her bedroom opened and Mrs Neville came in. The child was surrounded by her play-fellows, the companions of her life. A parrot hopped about on the table, a skye terrier sat on its hind-legs begging vaguely, and two little Italian greyhounds were playing together on a white woolly rug. Audine would have made a pretty picture in the midst of her favourites, all the mass of her long soft brown hair on her shoulders, and her large hazel eyes full of fun and merriment. She started up joyously to greet her friend.

"Dear aunt Mary, good morning! I am making all the haste I can to be ready for breakfast—please don't wait for me."

"My dear, I am sorry to say that I have come to tell you that I shall be obliged to leave you for a few days."

"To leave me! Oh, where are you going?"

"To London. I have a note from Roger Girwood this morning."

"Mr Neville is not ill, I hope?"

"Not yet; but Roger says he is overworking himself terribly. He

neither eats nor sleeps, but is in his studio working night and day. I have made up my mind to go and see him, only you will be so lonely."

The tears rose to Audine's eyes.

"I do not know what I shall do," she said. "I wish I might go with you."

"Would you? Should you like it?" cried Mrs Neville, eagerly—then added hastily, "perhaps your brother might not like it."

"Oh, George would not mind; he always let me have my own way. Will you take me? It would be very dull here alone," she said, ruefully."

"Can you be ready? I am going by the twelve o'clock train."

"Oh yes. I will call Burns, and have my clothes packed at once."

And Audine rang the bell. Up to the last moment Mrs Neville hesitated whether to allow Audine to accompany her or not; but finding that she had set her heart upon it, and was looking forward to a few days in London with keen enjoyment, she put her scruples aside, and telegraphed for rooms in the hotel to which she generally went.

They arrived in London about six o'clock, and sending servants

and luggage to the hotel, they started in a brougham for Roger Girwood's stone-yard.

It was growing very dark when they reached the Thames Embankment, and began to drive by the side of the river. The dark shadowy water was of a deep indigo blue, its stillness disturbed by the long shafts of yellow light reflected from the gas-lamps. With a swift rushing sound the last steamer swept by, bowing its funnel as if with a silent salute as it passed under the arches of the great bridges. A feeling of solemnity came over Audine as she looked down on the mighty river stored as deeply with secrets as the heart of a man with thoughts.

They passed trees and houses rapidly, and now they approached Girwood's yard. It could be seen from a distance, and known by its strange medley of objects—here a tall obelisk, gleaming white in the waning light, a couple of lions, a stately stag, and, most strange of all, the huge forms of three great figureheads of ships, each of which could have told its story, of buffeting with storm and wind, of dangers and terrors and anguish, and likewise of blue skies and rippling seas, of strange birds of gaudy plumage, and warm odours of tropical lands. Weather-beaten and bereft of paint stood the great Siren, on whose harp the gilding still lingered here and there; old Neptune, with longmatted hair; and a strange figure with stony eyes that the soldiers had called the Sphinx. They stood like great shadowy ghosts as the carriage drew up beneath them, and Audine involuntarily caught hold of her companion's gown.

They had to pick their way across the yard, for though there was a path, it was strewn with fragments of stone; and on every side of them rose tombs, marble

slabs, funeral urns and vases. The door opened, and good Mrs Parsons appeared, letting a flood of gas-light blaze in their dazzled eyes.

"Bless my heart, ma'am! is it you? Well, I'm sure you are welcome. Come in, ma'am; come in, miss; sit down—master will be right down glad to see you."

"Well, Parsons, and how is Mr Godfrey? Your master's account of him has brought me up to London."

"Take a seat, ma'am, and I'll tell you all about him. Master has just stepped out to speak to Honeywood round the corner, and will be back in five minutes."

"And is Mr Godfrey at home?"

"Yes, ma'am; he's never been outside of his door, not for the last fortnight."

She led the way into a large gas-lit room, furnished with some degree of comfort, two horsehair arm-chairs, a table with a drab table-cloth, and in one corner a very tall desk and stool. Smoothing the table-cloth with her hands, Mrs Parsons continued to speak, hardly giving herself time to breathe.

"I am sure it was time that you should come, ma'am, for me and master, we have been quite uneasy-like about Mr Godfrey; he do eat nothing at all, and looks more like a ghost than the strapping young gentleman he was,—and he works awful."

"Is the statue very beautiful, Parsons?"

"A female it is, ma'am, very tall, and not so very much to be seen of her. She has a great cloak on, much, as you might say, your waterproof cloak, and she is holding of it up high over her head with one hand, and looking down and bending forward, and the other hand is nothing but a block of stone as yet—lor! how he do worrit about that hand! Mr Castaletti, he told me that what he did in the cast did not please

Mr Godfrey; and he broke off the hand, and wishes to make another in the marble without ever a cast to guide him. The whole studee is full of pictures of hands, open and shut, and straight and twisted, backwards and forwards."

"When did Signor Castaletti come?"

"Some three weeks back, ma'am. He is pretty nearly always with Mr Godfrey."

"And does Mr Godfrey really work at night?"

"That he does, ma'am; and the studee such a blaze of light as you'd never believe. I put a glass of wine and a biscuit in the door last night, for I was afraid that he might be found stark and stiff in the morning, and him eaten nothing all day."

"I think I will go to him at once," said Mrs Neville.

"Then you won't stop and see master first, ma'am?"

"I will see him before I go, Mrs Parsons, but we will not wait for him now."

Audine, keenly interested and excited, followed Mrs Neville and the housekeeper to the studio. They had to cross another large yard at the back of the house, on each side of which were long sheds. The studio was a large square building facing the house opposite; the yard was full of straw, packing-cases of various kinds of rubbish, and it was now very dark. Mrs Parsons opened a small low door, out of a much larger one, and warning them to step over the low door-sill, they entered and found themselves in Godfrey Neville's studio.

It was brilliantly illuminated with blazing gas-jets, and for a moment they were so dazzled by the glare that they could see nothing. A distant bell summoned Mrs Parsons, who hastily retired across the yard, leaving the two ladies alone.

All seemed perfectly still, and the room had no other occupants than themselves.

The statue stood in a sort of alcove, the light so disposed as to fall in sharp shadows on the marble. Audine was carried away by its extreme beauty,—every tiny fold, every wave of the drapery told its tale; the face was altogether overshadowed by the upraised arm supporting her veil, but in the outline of the face, the divine expression of the mouth, she thought she perceived an almost supernatural beauty. Her eye fell on the left hand, and she saw that it was, as Parsons had described, a mere block of stone. A thrill of compassion passed through her; it was as if this was a natural deformity in some exquisitely perfect living being. Behind the statue stood a table covered with flowers—tall bluish-green vases filled with ferns and lilies, a great bowl of oriental china filled with glowing crimson roses, and slender Venetian glasses, opal-tinted, containing each a cream-coloured *Gloire de Dijon* or delicate-scented tea-rose;—all bore the stamp of a luxurious and somewhat effeminate taste. Plaster-casts, and easels covered with drawings, were in every corner of the studio. All represented the same subject,—hands in every possible attitude—outstretched, closed; some with fingers extended, some in the attitude of beckoning, some of repulsion,—it seemed as if an insurmountable difficulty had overtaken the artist at this moment, and, in consequence, that he had ceased working. They were still looking in wonder at the scene before them, when an inner door opened, and two men came out of a very small room within, the foremost carrying in one hand a small plaster-cast of a hand.

"Ha, madame, is that you?" cried he, advancing eagerly. "And

you have come up to see Godfrey's *Reine Blanche*?"

Audine could not help starting as she heard the name she herself had given to the statue.

"How are you, Signor Castaletti? I am delighted to see you in England. Godfrey, my own dear boy!" and Mrs Neville turned to her son with great eagerness.

Audine and the strange artist looked at each other with a moment's embarrassment, then he said,

"Mademoiselle has then seen the statue before Godfrey could have the pleasure of showing it to her?"

"We have this moment come in."

"Mademoiselle will take a chair?" and he brought one forward. Godfrey Neville and his mother had walked off a little way in earnest talk.

"Mademoiselle is fond of sculps?"

"Yes, of those I have seen. I have not had many opportunities of seeing them."

"This one is beautiful. But the hand, only the hand. Inspiration has fled. My friend can only see what is now perfect; he cannot bring himself to mind how the hand should be represented. Like the German fairy-tale of *Elisa* and the swans, the garment of inspiration is unfinished, without one sleeve, and the youngest brother goes through life with a wing instead of an arm. Such is the uncertainty of genius."

Audine laughed. "Alas for the *White Queen*!" she said. The queer little face of Signor Castaletti as he leant over her from the table on which he had seated himself with dangling legs, struck her as so ridiculous, that when she began to laugh, she could scarcely stop herself, and the little man laughed also.

"Godfrey is picturesque, is he not?" he said, pointing to his friend. Godfrey stood showing

different parts of the statue to his mother, with the light full on his handsome figure. His dress was artistic and picturesque, a dark velvet blouse, with the throat rather open to show a shirt-collar of Byronic dimensions.

"Yes, he is very handsome."

"Some have that gift, some have others," and he slapped his brow with the palm of his hand. "In one respect I more than compete with my friend. I never forget what is due to a beautiful female—he has not even given you the bow."

"He did not even see me," said Audine, smiling.

"Ah no, no, mademoiselle! not see you. Do not say that. No, no; you whose presence pervades the room!"

Audine laughed again. Suddenly Godfrey awoke to the consciousness of her presence, and came hastily towards her.

"How are you, Miss Fitzjames?"

Audine was startled by the strange excited expression of his face. She had not seen him for a long time, and she thought him very much altered, so thin and so wild-looking.

In a few minutes she and Mrs Neville were standing together before the statue. Castaletti having lowered the gas as low as it would go, slowly passed a torch backwards and forwards, to cause becoming shadows.

"She is beautiful, the *White Queen*, is she not?" he kept repeating.

Audine fancied she caught a sound in his voice that had not a true ring in it, and the remembrance of *Circe* and the swine flashed across her. On looking at him she found his small penetrating eyes watching her fixedly.

"*Per Bacco!*" he exclaimed. "Godfrey, look! Do you not see

the resemblance?" And to Audine's confusion and displeasure, he turned the light of the torch full on her face.

"It is very striking," said Mrs Neville, eagerly.

Godfrey did not seem to hear. He was dreamily sketching on a scrap of note-paper, a woman's hand.

Audine, to turn the conversation from herself, pointed to a rose which had caught in Mrs Neville's gown, and was half falling from the vase. At this instant Godfrey looked up, —a look of enchantment illumined his face.

"Do not move; for heaven's sake do not move your hand! keep it as it is, I implore."

Audine could not help laughing, though blushing crimson with confusion.

"It is perfect! the very thing!" cried Castaletti. "One finger a little advanced from the other. Would mademoiselle permit? Hot water, plaster of Paris—it is done in the winking of an eye."

And in five minutes Audine found her hand tightly enclosed in a warm soft paste, and was desired to keep perfectly still until the cast had set. The two sculptors stood close beside her, both watching eagerly.

The clock had struck eleven before Mrs Neville and Audine found themselves again in their brougham on the way back to the hotel.

"I do not half like that Signor Castaletti," said Mrs Neville.

"Nor I," said Audine; "there is a curious sarcastic turn of the lips and eyebrows which gives me a feeling of distrust. I could never be sure if he was a mere *esprit moqueur* or something of the malignant sprite."

"He is a contrast to Godfrey, is he not?"

"Hyperion to a satyr!"

"Did you admire the statue very much? It is curious that it should have such a strong look of you, Audine." Mrs Neville said this with averted head, looking out of the window.

"I am very much flattered by your thinking so; I thought it quite the loveliest face I had ever seen in my life."

Audine's imagination was keenly excited by the visit to the sculptor's studio. She could think and talk of nothing else. Mrs Neville, enchanted by her sympathetic admiration of her son and his works, scrupled not to prolong their stay in London for two or three days. A certain restfulness came over Godfrey, now that the missing link of inspiration had been supplied, and he consented sometimes to leave his work and accompany them to a gallery or a museum. These were days of extreme enjoyment to Mrs Neville; her son used to devote himself entirely to her, leaving Audine to the attentions of Castaletti, who was never long absent from his fellow-artist's elbow. For a time Audine was amused by the flowery conversations of her companion, full of flattery and ingeniously composed compliments; then she grew somewhat fatigued by it, and wished that Mrs Neville would not so continuously talk to her son. But she was good-natured, and seeing that these conversations were intensely precious to her friend, she never complained.

One day they were walking together in the Park, and Castaletti suddenly, to Audine's astonishment, changed his usual style of talk, and began to speak of his own country. He spoke with such fervour, such passion of Italy, that Audine was quite carried away by his enthusiasm. He drew the most vivid picture of his own village in the wild Campagna. He possessed the rare

gift of the Italian *improvisatore*; and his words were so ringing, so powerful, that Godfrey and his mother paused to listen.

"Castaletti is a wonderful *improvisatore*," said Godfrey, smiling. "I have seen him excite his audience almost to frenzy, and move them to sobs and tears."

Mrs Neville, who cared more for the details of his life than Godfrey was giving her than for the finest eloquence on earth, drew him on.

Castaletti's voice sank suddenly from the excited account of the beauty of his home, to a soft, tender, modulated tone. He described the mother who had parted with him, when the passion for his art had carried him away, and led him to Rome. He described how, one by one, the shackles of ignorance, homeliness, and prejudice had fallen from him, and left him awhile lonely and isolated. Then the art which he embraced with such fervour encircled him with her loving embrace,—he became an artist. Fame, with her golden trumpet, allured him from afar. He lived for the future; he endured the present; he spurned the past.

Audine's large eyes were gazing on him. What a strange transformation it seemed! He saw them and the parted rosy lips, and he suddenly began to speak again, gently, softly, tenderly. He asked her if she would not long for the golden sun and the purple skies of Italy—for the wide world, one glorious carpet of flowers—for the clustering roses, the luxuriance of colour and warmth and odour; and Audine was half frightened, and could scarcely answer. It was a great relief to her when Mrs Neville stopped and waited for her, and did not leave her again till they returned home.

Mrs Neville was too much ab-

sorbed in her son to perceive that Castaletti had conceived one of those sudden and violent passions for Audine Fitzjames that belong to a southern nature. Love at first sight, so much laughed at and disbelieved, was no trifle to him. Audine was startled by the vehemence of his manner, and by his rapid change of colour when she spoke to him.

Her eyes were opened on the day on which they returned to Lealstone. They had reached the station from whence they were to start, when a cab dashed up to the door, and Castaletti leaped out; his face was as white as a sheet, and working with emotion.

Mrs Neville was half inclined to be frightened, and caught her son's arm. Godfrey had accompanied them to the station.

"What does he want, Godfrey?" she said.

"Only to say good-bye," he answered, and she was satisfied. Castaletti entreated Audine to speak to him one moment in the waiting-room. With gentle dignified manner the girl refused, but allowed him to walk beside her up to the end of the platform.

In one moment, speaking low but very violently, he poured out the passionate declaration of his love. He told her that he knew that his feeling was not returned; that Englishwomen were not like his countrywomen—they must be won by gold. He declared that he would make his fortune, and lay it at her feet or die. The extravagance of his words and the working of his features so alarmed Audine, that she involuntarily put out her hands in the direction of Godfrey. Castaletti saw the gesture, and his face became almost like that of a demon.

"I see!" he said between his teeth. "I know well the reason that the White Queen is only a

portrait of yourself. Your image is never absent from his brain; but he does not love you! no! no!"

He seized her hand, kissed it passionately, and was gone. Audine ran back to her friend; and not till they were safe in the carriage and some miles on their way, did she feel that she had courage

enough to describe what had taken place.

"I hope that we may have seen the last of him," said Mrs Neville, severely. "It was a great impertinence, after so short an acquaintance."

Audine gave a little shiver. "His satyr-like face haunts me," she said.

CHAPTER IV.

Summer had glided into autumn; the earth, bereft of her golden corn, replaced the colour in hedge and tree, and the dews fell heavily night and morning.

One night, about nine o'clock, Godfrey Neville arrived at Lealstone Hall.

The evening was very hot and steamy. Mrs Neville and Audine were sitting together—the French windows open. Audine had a book on her lap, which she was trying to read, but she had been very busy all day, and her eyes would close of themselves; and after resisting for a while, the book silently slid to the ground, and her head sank back on her low arm-chair, and she slept.

There was no ring at the bell, no knock or sound of servants hurrying, but pushing open the half-closed window, Godfrey Neville came in.

Mrs Neville sprang to her feet, surprised and startled; but he put his finger on his lip, and beckoned to her not to wake Audine, but to come out to him. She glanced at her thin shoes and the wet grass; but there was something in his manner which frightened her, and she followed him without remonstrance.

Audine, undisturbed, slept on for more than an hour, then suddenly woke up with a feeling of consciousness that somebody was looking at

her, close to her, bending over her. She raised herself suddenly. Yes! some one was quite close to her—a dark figure; it was very dark now, and the servants had not brought the lights. She could see nothing but an outline, and could almost have screamed when she fancied she recognised the satyr-like face of Castaletti.

"Hush!" he said, very softly. "Do not speak! I am satisfied, he is not here."

"Who is not here? What do you mean?" Audine rose to her feet, trembling violently.

"He—Godfrey."

"No; he has not been here for many weeks—months even. Let me call aunt Mary," she exclaimed in terror, for he caught hold of her hands.

"No, no. I want to tell you Godfrey has a bride already—a perfect bride—a rare piece of perfection; you are to know that."

"Let me go."

"Yes, yes; but remember that there is no perfection like his bride, and he is hers, all hers—do you hear, Audine? He is mad, and he has wed her." She shook from head to foot. He continued holding her hands, and speaking in the same loud rapid whisper—

"Yes—she is very beautiful this White Queen,—Hera come down from heaven. I shall come again,

Audine; I have not finished my work yet. But I tell you this, that you may know when the time comes—he has a bride already.”

“Yes, yes,” she gasped. He let go her hands, and went towards the door. Audine leant against the wall, half fainting with fear. He turned back suddenly, and repeated—

“I am coming back, Audine, very soon. I cannot understand Godfrey’s madness; but it is true, and we all know that he is mad.”

And he was gone. Audine rang the bell violently,—the butler came.

“Where is Mrs Neville?” she said.

“Mrs Neville and Mr Godfrey are in the garden, ma’am.”

“Is that strange gentleman gone?”

“Yes, ma’am; he has gone. I told him that I had just seen Mrs Neville in the garden, but he did not go there.”

“And you say Mr Godfrey has come?”

The man looked surprised. “Yes; about an hour ago, ma’am: Mr Godfrey went round by the garden window.”

“Ah! Will you tell Mrs Burns I want to speak to her. I am going up-stairs, and if Mrs Neville asks for me, say I would not disturb her as Mr Godfrey had arrived.”

The butler called Audine’s nurse, who was astonished to find that her young lady could hardly stand, and that she was almost too frightened to speak. She took her up-stairs, and sat by her half the night, till her violent trembling had ceased.

Castaletti left the house by the gate which led on to the moor. It was quite dark now, and the whole country was illuminated by the blazing furnaces. On the horizon glared the great open chimneys of Anchester iron-works, vomiting out flames and black smoke; on every

side burning lights, athwart which towered the tall chimneys; and the air was full of the hum of never-ceasing machinery; the whistles of engines slowly dragging their heavy loads up the steep incline; the busy rush of the trucks as they sped downwards again, and the rattling of the iron ropes as they rushed over the wheels.

Lealstone lay in the hollow beneath. The road to it lay parallel with the boundary of the park; but Castaletti, in his excitement, turned to the left and not to the right, and went his way over the open moor.

Further he went, and still it seemed to him that he did not approach the town; on the contrary, the country widened and widened, here and there a short row of squalid cottages, here and there great pools of standing water, with thick clay banks, and that unceasing whirl of machinery always going on.

Castaletti grew suddenly alive to his situation. Before him the road abruptly rose up on a steep-pitched bridge, under which passed trucks from one pit to another. He went to the summit of the bridge, and looked over the country round. Far, perhaps miles away, he saw Lealstone; between it and him lay a coal-pit, of which the furnaces burned brightly. Castaletti made this coal-pit his first goal, from thence he thought he could go straight down to the valley. The lights gleamed brightly—perhaps it would not be so far as it looked, and at all events he would ask the pitmen at the furnaces how to arrive there. The moon now shone out with fitful brilliancy, and he could see two of them standing together. So he went on, now slipping into deep clay, now into water which wet him to the knee. He was drawing near to the pit—within a hundred paces—when he saw the two men

by the furnaces looking towards him, and suddenly shouting loudly, then they began running in his direction. A cold terror came over him. What would they do? Could they be calling to him? He summoned up all his courage. Yes! They were gesticulating wildly, frantically. He imagined some terrible danger pursuing him, perceptible to them though not to himself. In his fear Castaletti began to run towards them. What could they want? What meant their cries? His hair bristled up in fright, and his lips muttered the

half-forgotten paternoster of his childhood. The moon suddenly disappeared behind a cloud. He still ran—one more wild shout from the men. Ha! What was it? His foot stumbled. He was falling—down, down, with wild frantic arms vainly grasping the air, and all was over.

About a hundred feet from the pit was an old disused shaft covered by an iron grating. The men had been cleaning out some rubbish to-day, tossing it down the shaft, and the grating had not been replaced.

CHAPTER V.

It was growing darker and darker, and still Godfrey Neville and his mother paced the garden walks deep in conversation. Audine, asleep in the drawing-room, dreaming the sweet dreams of her lovely childhood, had vanished from their thoughts. The mother, pale and frightened, wept bitter tears of fear and anxiety, and never looked on Godfrey's face without a shudder. Was her great dread, the horror of her life, coming to pass? Was Godfrey's mind indeed unhinged?—jangling like sweet bells out of tune?—or what did this wild story mean?

"Mother, you will think me mad," he had begun. "You will never believe the strange story I have to tell."

She looked up in his face, saw the wild far-away look of his eyes, the damp dishevelled hair, the restless working of his brows, and her heart died within her.

"Godfrey, my boy, what do you mean?"

"You know, mother, how the image of my ideal has haunted my brain; how night and day it has been with me, slowly growing under

my hand from one beauty to another. She is perfect!" he cried; "she is perfection itself. All the divine attributes, each of which may be met with in a separate individuality, are combined in her—love, sweetness, angelic charity, modesty, grace, mercy, and peace have kissed each other—these words are from the Bible, are they not?—and altogether express the perfection of my White Queen."

"I know it is lovely, Godfrey, and bears a curious resemblance to Audine."

"Audine! is she like Audine?" he said, dreamily. "Oh yes, maybe; there is a likeness between earth and heaven; you can see it in the heaven-reflected colour of water. Yes, they may be like."

"You cannot compare warm life to cold stone!"

"Cold stone! She lives! she breathes!" he shuddered.

"Godfrey, what do you mean?"

He suddenly stopped her, and seized her hands; his own were burning with fever. "Why did you go away and leave me, mother? Why did you not stay, you and the child who is like my queen?"

Mrs Neville's tears began to fall.

"It would have been better for me if you had not gone, mother! then perhaps this strange thing might not have happened."

"Tell me, Godfrey, what has happened?"

He went on.

"It was an inspiration. Her hand was lovely. It completed my perfection,—that alone remained to do, and she would have stood before me completed. Tell me, mother, do you remember her hand—were the fingers raised?"

"I do not know," she murmured, trying to choke back her tears.

"I rack my brain night and day trying to recall how those fingers were placed, and I cannot; perhaps I shall some day," he went on—"some day when I am calmer, and my head is not aching."

"Godfrey, try and be calm; tell me what makes you speak so wildly. Oh, my boy, what has happened?"

"Listen! I had been working—working night and day, and she was almost done; the cast of her little hand was beautiful, and out of the marble had grown part of it, fine-grained, and white as snow. You know Castaletti, my old friend? He has been very strange of late, fitful in his temper,—sometimes bitter, almost savage; sometimes melting into maudlin tears at a single thoughtless word. He also has a work on hand—a pretty woman seated with a book on her knee; he has destroyed it by an effort to change the expression to some look of my White Queen. He shed tears over the failure. Sometimes I feared that he drank too much, he was so capricious and so strange. At last he told me that an impulse had seized him to go to Rome; that something had occurred which made him long for wealth, crave for it passionately, and that he knew he was but wast-

ing time here; that he must go to the city of art, and drink in beauty from the rich stores of his native land. I was grieved for my light-hearted friend of old—he who had never known a sorrow or a care. I grieved for him, for something had crossed his path, and I thought of the old story—the sylvan faun had developed into a suffering man. Was it the air of sordid, money-loving England? Poor Castaletti! Poor friend! So he was to go, and before he went he entreated that he might give a farewell supper to all his friends in my studio. I was glad, and would have done anything to please him, for I felt grieved to lose him.

The day of the supper came. Castaletti asked many of his friends, all foreigners. He was busy all day, bringing in himself ices and rare delicacies, so that I said to him, this is not the way to grow rich; and so much wine was provided that in jest I cautioned Roger to prepare litters to carry away his friends. Castaletti is theatrical in all his ideas. He brought in a great veil of golden embroidered silk, and covered the Queen from head to foot; fresh flowers filled the studio; he brought out all the strangely-mixed colours we artists love and wound them about, over sofas and chairs and old chests. The room was a blaze of light, and the colours glowed purple and blue, crimson and gold."

"Gently! O Godfrey, be calm!"

"I am calm indeed, mother; do not be afraid. The clock struck nine, and the guests arrived."

"What day was this?"

"Two nights ago; they seem like years. As I was saying, the guests came in—Mattei and Ercole, and Binda, and the two Strohmayers, and the great singer Giannetto, with his strange superhuman voice; and before long the wine began to flow

freely, song followed song, and gay tales and stories were told, and loud peals of laughter rang through the studio. Castaletti grew maddest of all, and always his one theme was the wonderful beauty of the White Queen, who stood concealed by the folds of her golden veil. He sprang up, the inspiration of the Italian *improvisatore* came upon him, and he poured out glowing rhapsodies—wild songs of this wondrous hidden beauty. He was drinking more and more. At last——” Godfrey paused and drew a deep breath—the drops stood on his brow. “Castaletti poured out a brimming glass of champagne; he held it up to the light to show how it laughed and sparkled like a topaz. I would not drink at first, but he pledged my lady, the White Queen, and dared me to refuse. I drank: then, mother, there came on me a madness like his own. I joined in the loud choruses they sang; but ever in front of me it seemed—I know not whether ’twas my fancy or true—truth and fancy! fancy or truth! which is truth? which fancy? I cannot tell. I thought Castaletti was always watching me, crouching a little down, with his keen eyes on my face, and his mouth like a satyr’s, all contorted with wild merriment. He went on with his poems and songs. At last, when our excitement had reached its height, he rushed forward, tore the veil from off the White Queen, and showed her standing like a pure child of heaven gazing down on the storm-tossed world. There was a moment’s hush; all stood spell-bound by her beauty. Then Castaletti’s strange words poured forth again. He spoke of Hera come down to dwell among men, and claiming as slave he who had called her from Olympus. There was loud laughter among them as they demanded that I should acknow-

ledge my thralldom—should devote myself to the worship of this peerless White Queen. And we laughed and jested; and the strange madness that had come over me returned with renewed power, and I pledged myself, and placed my ring on her snow-white hand. I cannot remember much more,” continued Godfrey, putting the damp hair back from his brow. “But a heavy sleep seemed to have fallen upon me, an unutterably deep and dreamless sleep, such as I never had slept before. It was broad daylight when I opened my eyes. I was alone, lying on the ground at the feet of my White Queen. Some one had placed a cushion under my head. I remember the strong odour of the lilies which filled my senses. I saw her divine face bending over me with a look of heavenly compassion. My eyes fell on her hand. Mother! mother! let me hold you.”

He trembled violently, and held her hands tightly, going on in a sharp, harsh whisper—“I saw the ring, my father’s ring; the signet I always used. I had placed it on the outstretched finger; you remember, do you not? and the . . . hand was closed.”

“Godfrey.”

“She has claimed me! I am hers! And now, whenever I am alone, whenever I shut my eyes, she comes in and stands bending over me with her heavenly face. I can see her now.”

He passed his hand over his eyes, then went on hurriedly, “And so I am bound to her! and so I can never more be free from the thralldom of the White Queen!”

“It is all some wild strange dream,—a trick of your imagination,” faltered his mother.

“I wish I could think so; but if it is a dream, it is one from which I cannot awaken.”

“And where is Castaletti?”

"He has gone back to Italy; was gone, Roger tells me, before I awoke."

"I must think over all this, Godfrey," said Mrs Neville, feeling miserable and bewildered. "We

must send for Roger Girwood, and sift well this mystery. I will prove it to be nothing, my dear; and you must not leave me, you must stay with me now."

"Yes, take care of me, mother."

CHAPTER VI.

News of the accident that had occurred at the disused shaft of the bridge pit was quickly bruited all through Lealstone, and naturally came to the ears of Audine. For two or three days it never occurred to her that the fearfully crushed body that had been found could be that of her unfortunate suitor. One day when Mr Hunson, her brother's agent, was speaking to her, she heard for the first time that the body was unrecognised; that it appeared to be that of a man quite unknown in the district, and no one could give any clue to his identity. Audine, in horror, exclaimed, "Can it be Signor Castaletti?" Mr Hunson caught at the idea. In great confusion and sorrow she told her story, and then found, to her terror and dismay, that she would be obliged to see the body and declare whether it was that of the Italian or not. She told of Godfrey's connection with Castaletti, and Mr Hunson considered that Mr Neville's deposition would be enough, and the poor child be spared the haunting terror of such a sight.

Mr Hunson lost no time. He found Godfrey, and they went together to the house where the unfortunate man had been laid, but he was totally unrecognisable. His clothes were different from those he had been in the habit of wearing, and instead of recognising his friend, Godfrey rather inclined to the belief that it was not he. Still there was this strange visit of his to Audine, and his subsequent disappear-

ance to account for. At best, it was not satisfactory. Roger Girwood arrived at Lealstone the following day, obedient to a request from Mrs Neville. He looked very much worried and perplexed, and constantly rubbed his forehead with the back of his hand—an old habit in times of anxiety. To Mrs Neville's inquiries the answers were far from reassuring. He described the supper of Castaletti and his friends as exceeding in noise and excitement anything that had ever taken place in his house before. He said that, invited by Godfrey, he had carefully examined the statue that very day; that certainly then the hand was still a block, with the fingers extended. He had remarked how beautifully modelled the fingers were. He said, that on the morning of the 23d, seeing Godfrey's bedroom-door open, he sought him in the studio, and discovered him as he had described himself, lying at the feet of the statue, and that then he had perceived, with great astonishment, that the hand of the statue had apparently closed upon the ring.

In answer to Mrs Neville's questions, he declared that had any one been working on the statue during the night he could have known nothing of it—there were no bedrooms near the studio, the yard stretching between it and the house. He said that Castaletti came in in the morning from the street, not from the studio side of the buildings; that he had asked for God-

frey; that hearing he was not awake, he left a message of farewell for him, saying that a letter from Rome had hastened his departure. He was dressed for travelling in a grey tweed suit, with a felt hat, carried a bag and umbrella-case, and had a small pormanteau on a cab at the door, and he only remained five minutes.

Roger Girwood was taken to see the body, but he also inclined to the strong belief that it was not that of Castaletti. The interment was no longer delayed, and the mystery remained unsolved.

Audine found more comfort in talking to her old nurse than to any one, even Mrs Neville, who appeared very anxious and *distract* always now. Burns could see no mystery incapable of being interpreted in the easiest and most natural way. Romance was an abomination to her, yet she would, in former days, endure the fairy-tales which Audine read to her; and notwithstanding the efforts of her charge to awaken some poetical feeling, would invariably make some remark which had a most sobering effect. Audine would lay down Hans Andersen in despair on hearing the little mermaid described as a "sadly imprudent young person"—and even Sintram, in whom her soul delighted, as the "poor boy who had fits;" but still she persevered. Now that a real romance had taken place in her life, and one really fraught with terror, her feeling was entirely a longing to get rid of the mystery, to be assured that Castaletti's odd visit was only the usual strange proceeding of a man in love, not out of the common at all, and had nothing to do with the horrible accident at the bridge pit. Burns took it all very tranquilly and soberly; and it was well for Audine that she did so, for her nerves had been much

shaken by the fright she had had, and for some time her nurse thought her very far from well.

Mrs Neville was so much occupied with Godfrey that Audine did not see much of her now; she felt a certain dread of the young sculptor, with his strange eyes. So she sat in her own sitting-room upstairs busy with her music and drawing, and with old Burns sitting by her, to whom she chattered incessantly. She was painting the shutters of her own room with groups of flowers, birds, and butterflies, and all had to be done before her brother's return—that return that she pined for in her loving little heart, more than any one, save her old nurse, suspected.

One day when they were sitting thus, Audine suddenly asked her nurse how long ago she remembered Mrs Neville.

"Ever since you were quite a baby, Miss Audine," she answered. "When General Neville—who's dead and gone—and his lady came first to stay with your dear papa and mamma. She was a very pretty young lady, and Master Godfrey—Mr Neville that is—was a beautiful boy, as lively and quick as a needle, and very fond of you, Miss; he used to be always carrying you up and down stairs with as much care as I could myself."

"And General Neville, what was he like?"

"He was a most gentlemanlike, pleasant, affable gentleman, but quite crazy in his love for Master Godfrey. I said often to your dear mamma, that I thought it very bad for the young gentleman to be constantly watched and made of, and his head filled with ideas beyond his age; he was always dreaming, never naughty and mischievous as you were, which would have been more comfortable and natural in a boy."

"And I want to know what was the matter with General Neville."

"They called it op—op—something—official illusions, I think. He was very ill; he grew thinner and more wild-looking every time I saw him. I met Mr Godfrey in the shrubbery to-day, and I thought to myself, 'You are growing into the very moral of your poor papa.'"

"Oh, Burnie, I hope not."

"I hope not, indeed, my dear; for it was very sad to see the poor gentleman."

At this moment the door opened and Mrs Neville came in. The sight of her worn anxious face made Audine go to her and kiss her warmly.

"I have brought you some bulrushes, Audine, that have been sent from Scotland. I thought that they would look well amongst those yellow irises."

"They are lovely, aunt Mary! How good of you to send for them!"

"Godfrey sent for them when we were talking about it—we want so much to give you pleasure, dear child."

"How good you always are to me, aunt Mary!" said Audine, busily arranging the bulrushes in tall vases. "They are just what I wanted so much. Do get me some warm water, Burnie, to revive the leaves."

Burns left the room, and Mrs Neville came up to Audine, putting her arms round her waist.

"Kiss me, child!" she said. Audine threw aside her flowers, and gave her what the children call a great hug. Mrs Neville looked at her for a moment with an anxious eager look, as if she was about to say something; then stopping, she made a hurried rendezvous for the next day, and left the room, just as Burns returned with the hot water.

"Mrs Neville looks sadly worn and ill," said the latter.

"Yes, she does. I wonder what can be the matter; she has never looked like herself since her son returned. Give me that long iris, Burnie;—no—the other with the two buds; thanks. How lovely they are!"

NOTES FROM CYPRUS.

CYPRUS is an island of sudden changes. Both climate and landscape are subject to rapid variations. From the glare of an overpowering sun one may enter the cool shade of a tropical garden, with the murmur of water trickling past as it wanders amongst the groves of oranges, figs, and palms. The bare treeless plain may be changed in a very short space for pine-forests of magnificent trees: instead of sand and dust, we trample on bracken-fern by the side of rills and torrents running in steep gorges. The climate changes from great heat to chilling cold. We have noted a daily variation of 50° of temperature; after a calm, clear morning, with the distant hills apparently close, suddenly a windy hurricane, accompanied by a thick haze, comes over the island, and shuts out the view. In the landscape it is the same. There are no gentle slopes; the hills all rise steeply from the plains; the water-courses run in deep beds, cut through alluvial soil and rock. These signs show the island to have been visited by heavy tropical rains. After the winter of 1877 the great Messarea plain was a lake of water and slime. This winter there has been barely five inches of rainfall—hardly enough to make the roads muddy for a few hours.

We were not fortunate coming to Cyprus in a year of exceptional heat, after a late season of heavy rain. Fever was more prevalent in the island than it has ever been known to be before, but the crops were good. This year we may expect very little fever, but a great scarcity of provisions. The wheat crop has completely failed, and the barley is very poor in the great cereal-grow-

ing plain. The harvests are now being reaped, and it is pitiful to see the poor women pulling up the thin stalks of barley, only nine inches long in most cases, where, in former years, the sickles cut down thick crops. Fortunately this is not the case all over the island. In the many fertile valleys of the hill districts, such as Papho, there has been enough rain to produce good crops; and though the great plain has failed completely, there will probably be sufficient in other districts to keep off absolute want, though prices are already becoming exorbitantly high.

There is no doubt that the resources of the island are great, if properly developed. It possesses a very fertile soil, capable of growing almost anything if carefully cultivated and irrigated; without water, the hot sirocco winds from the east soon dry up any vegetation. Irrigation, however, is not a difficult matter. On the plain, water is found almost everywhere at from 18 to 20 feet below the surface; and along the hillsides there are many springs and rivulets that run to waste through the inertness of the people. They would willingly pay a handsome profit for the water if it was brought to them, but have not the capital or the enterprise to make the required aqueducts themselves. A few windmill-pumps on the plain would irrigate a farm sufficiently to make it independent of lack of rainfall, and for the production of crops and trees that require watering after the rainy season is past. There is no want of wind: a strong breeze springs up every day from the N.W., and very often covers the plain in a thick haze; mirage is seen in every direction,—lakes and

cliffs rising picturesquely out of a dead flat. The hill-slopes grow vines in profusion, and these vineyards might be greatly extended. Many beautiful spots exist amongst the hills lying completely waste, grown over with scrub, hiding the old rock-cut wine-presses, that show where in ancient times there were once fruitful vineyards. Had the island been taken over by France instead of England, the French would have soon developed the wine-trade enormously. All that is wanted is capital to clear the scrub and plant the vines. For instance, a large tract of hill country, called the Agamas, was, I believe, offered for sale not long ago—it measures about 40 square miles: only £200 was bid, and it was not sold. A little more, however, would have bought it. This tract extends out to Cape Arnaugti, and has the most beautiful slopes for vines, with a low-lying narrow plain along the shore, watered by several springs, one of which now turns a mill. The sea surrounds the property on all but one side, and the coast is indented with little bays and creeks. The hills rise about 1500 feet above the shore. Old wine-presses testify to its former fruitfulness. The hills are now covered with scrub, and are only used as grazing-ground for flocks of goats. Small portions of the plain are cultivated by a few shepherds, who also collect firewood and ship it from the shore. With capital these slopes might be green with vines, the low plains covered with groves of oranges and fruit-trees. Wine might be produced and shipped on the spot without any transport; and besides these advantages, there is undoubtedly great mineral wealth beneath the soil, capable of paying largely for any outlay.

This is not a single case. There are many places in the island just

as good waiting for the hand of the capitalist to change them from barren wastes to their former fruitfulness. Land lies idle that would soon form splendid cotton-fields; wheat, barley, and all cereals grow in profusion. Tobacco of a very superior quality can be produced. All the tobacco consumed is now imported, owing to the heavy taxation formerly imposed upon the grown article by the Turks. Indigo might be grown in the warm valleys. All that is required is enterprise and capital.

Roads are a great want in the development of the island. The natives have no desire to save time,—they follow the same narrow rugged tracks up and down the rocks that their fathers followed before them, and if Government undertook to make roads for them, they would soon be again destroyed; but this would change if a few Englishmen settled in the country. The same thing would happen as has happened in the Lebanon. The English colony goes up from Beyrout to some village in the hills for the summer months: a road where there was none before is soon made by the natives; the houses are improved; rents rise; a hotel is started, and a thriving active community takes the place of a torpid village. The same effect would happen if a few colonists arrived: the natives would soon make roads where they were needed, and the example of activity would speedily infuse energy into the sleepy inhabitants when they saw the advantages of it before them.

The two races that inhabit the country are very distinct types. The Turks are tall, well-built men, generally spare and active. The great characteristic that distinguishes them from the Greeks is their proud bearing. They all have a certain reserved expression on their

faces, evidently thinking well of themselves. They are not at all fanatical about their religion; and though good Moslems, they do not share in the sterner precepts of the law of Mohammed. They work better than the Greeks, are more inclined to take an interest in what is being done, but are also more independent and less submissive under reproof. It is rare to find the Turks inhospitable: they are generally very obliging at first. For instance, I have been told at a village that everything would be provided for nothing; that I must accept their hospitality, not only in words of politeness, but really intending that I should live on them. After refusing such offers, it is strange to be cheated in the price of barley and chickens; but it is Turkish and oriental. They generally have receding foreheads, whereas the Greek forehead is straight; and the dark Nubian and semi-Nubians have domed foreheads. They prefer white-and-red-striped Manchester stuffs for their clothes, whereas the Greeks are almost always dressed in blue indigo-dyed stuffs of home manufacture. They are brave, fearing and looking up to no one, making splendid soldiers, and are peaceful, moderately honest, and industrious.

The Greeks are also fine-made men. They have a mild and humble expression of countenance, and are timid. They hide in the villages as a Government official passes through, without any real cause. They are very religious, generally going to church every evening and keeping a great number of saints' days, and believing every superstitious story. They are stupid, and are bad workers, shirking as much as they can. They like a shilling a-day, but after two or three days they are all inclined to strike with three shillings. They

are rich enough to lie in the sun and do nothing for a long time; and they object to working when they become such capitalists. There are bright exceptions to this rule—energetic Greeks, who are better sometimes than stupid Turks; but the great test of stamina, the keeping at continual steady work, breaks them all down. They are not nearly so intelligent or such good workers as the Maronites and Druses of the Lebanon.

The women of both races are not at all prepossessing; it is rare to see a face even tolerably good-looking, and their figures and voices are very objectionable. The Turkish women veil their faces, which is an advantage. The women do a great deal of manual labour,—fetching water, accompanying their lords to the fields to reap the harvest, and thrashing the corn: they help in everything except ploughing and sowing. It is odd to see the parties in the fields, reaping, almost always one man to two women, both Greek and Turkish alike.

The children are pretty, some with flaxen hair and cherub faces. The Turkish children are not nearly so pretty as the Greek.

There are a good many landed proprietors of a superior class, looked up to as rich men by their fellow-townsmen, whose word has generally a great influence in the village. Most well-situated villages have one of these magnates, who owns more land and has a better house than any one else. When Turks, they live very retired lives on their properties, and seem to be inclined to be miserly. They associate freely with their *employés*, and it is difficult to distinguish between them. The natives give them the title of *Effendi*. The large Greek proprietors very rarely live on their land,—they prefer to live in the largest town of the district, letting

the land, or having an agent to farm for them. There are also a few Armenians who have large possessions but live in the towns.

The different monasteries of the Greek Church own a large amount of land derived from different sources. Grants from the Sultan, purchases, and legacies, have made them rich. In many cases the lands owned by monasteries have been allowed to lie idle; others have tilled them without opposition, and have thus obtained a right of possession. Thus the boundaries of church properties are in a very confused state, owing to no trouble being taken by the heads of the different monasteries to keep their boundaries clear. A lawsuit with a rich monastery was not objectionable to a Turkish judge, who was able generally to make it very profitable to himself. Naturally the old monks put off the day when they would be obliged to part with their savings in bribes. The result has been that the properties have gradually been encroached upon by the surrounding proprietors.

Next to the monasteries is the *vakuf* land that has been left to mosques and Mohammedan charities by worthy Moslems. These lands are usually let at a very low rent,—they cannot be sold. To escape from a disputed title, a Turk would make his land *vakuf*, and rent it himself. The remainder of the land is divided up into very small holdings owned by the peasants. These properties are subdivided amongst the sons on the parents' decease, so that a quarter of an acre sometimes belongs to four or five brothers. Women were formerly not allowed to inherit land, and they generally inherited trees. Thus the trees belong to a different proprietor to the land.

There are no hedges and ditches in Cyprus. The different allotments are marked, or supposed to be marked, out by stones; but as these stones have generally disappeared, the holdings are only known approximately.

Each village is a little community of itself. They elect each year a head-man called the *Muktar*, with a council of elders to assist him. The *Muktar* is recognised by the Government, and all communications to the village pass through him. He collects taxes, is called upon to answer any questions, to find offenders, and to keep order. In mixed villages of Turks and Greeks, where the division is about equal, they elect two *Muktars*, one for each sect; but when a large majority is of one creed, one *Muktar* is deemed sufficient for all. Though Greeks and Turks may live together in the same village all their lives, they associate very little together. Generally the village is divided into quarters,—the Greek houses in one part, and the Turkish houses together in another. A Turk marrying a Greek girl is very rare, though it does occasionally take place. The reverse never happens, differing in this from the case among the inhabitants of Crete.

Next to the *Muktar* in the social scale of the village is the priest or *papa*. In Turkish villages it is the *hodja* or schoolmaster who keeps the mosque. The priests are married, and till their lands the same as any peasant. They generally have been taught to read and write, and are looked up to by the people as guides in cases of difficulty.

The villages on the plain and low-lying hills are almost entirely built of sun-dried mud-slabs about one foot three inches square by four inches deep. The roof is made of wooden rafters laid flat, covered with reed mats; on this about a

foot of earth is placed and rammed hard. This forms a good protection from the sun, but the rain soon washes it away. The better class of houses are of two storeys, with a veranda along the upper one, and a row of arches supporting it below. The upper storey is used for sleeping and living in. In the hills the houses are built of stone, and the churches have pitched roofs covered with tiles. On the plain, the churches are large rectangular buildings, with vaulted or domed roofs coated with cement. There is always an apse at the east end, and generally a small belfry is attached. The interiors are decorated according to the Greek fashion, with a heavy wooden screen, which is generally well carved and covered with gilding. The Russian eagles frequently figure on the gates of the sanctuary.

The natives, both Turk and Greek, wear high boots with clump soles, loose baggy trousers, a shirt and small jacket, and a fez; a Manchester cotton handkerchief is tied round the fez by the Greeks, and sometimes a white turban, but generally plain by the Turks. On feast-days and at weddings the Greeks dress themselves up in very long baggy trousers of dark-blue cloth or shiny calico, tied round the knee, so as to show a white stocking and shoes with buckles. Their waistcoats are bright with embroidery, and they wear small close-fitting jackets. Turkish Effendis and landed proprietors assume a European dress.

The English rule is undoubtedly popular in Cyprus. The Greeks are naturally more enthusiastic than the Turks in their expression of devotion to the Government of the Queen. For instance, in the village of Kethroea on New-Year's eve, while the clocks were chiming the advent of another year, shouts and

cheers for Victoria and the English woke us up. No English were with them, and the shouting was quite spontaneous.

The Turks are also pleased with the new rule. They are not worried by *zabtiehs*, they have no fear of conscription, and they rather like the English.

The Greeks may be partially descendants from an ancient Cypriot race. There are some curious types amongst them,—traces of Egyptian crusading and German blood, with, of course, a strong mixture of the Greek peasant race. In the north-west portion of the island, about Korruachitz, there are several villages of Maronites, settlers from the Lebanon. They appear to have arrived about fifteen years ago, and have maintained their religion, though they have given up their language and taken to speaking Greek.

Flocks of goats and fat-tailed sheep roam all over the country in large herds, picking up a scanty sustenance on dried-up herbage. They give a good supply of milk in the spring, particularly in the mountain districts of Limasol and Papho. A large number of cheeses are made and exported from Limasol every year. The cattle are, as a rule, small, and are used for ploughing and carting. They are not milked or eaten by the natives. Donkeys and mules are the common beasts of burden, and are very numerous. The mules are good, but the natives do not understand loading them properly. They have slight trumpery saddles, and, as a rule, carry very little. Ponies are common, and are ridden and used as pack-animals. There are also a few inferior camels.

A slight description of the country from the northern shore to Troados will give some idea of the topography of the island.

The northern shore is completely cut off from the rest of the island by a range of mountains that only leave a narrow strip of very fertile reddish soil between them and the sea. This plain is covered with carob and olive trees, and is well watered from the hills close by. The dense foliage of the carob gives a delightful shade; and this is one of the pleasantest portions of the island to live in. Unfortunately this plain is very narrow, and the land rises steeply to the northern range of mountains, which stand up in sharp crags and peaks, stretching away east and west the whole length of the island. On some of these peaks and overhanging precipices castles are perched, such as the medieval castle of Hilaricon and the two queens' houses at Buffavento and Kantara. The two latter appear probably to have been used as places to look out for an enemy from the north, and by lighting beacons to warn the island of coming danger. Of both of them a legend relates that they are composed of a hundred rooms, ninety-nine of which are known, and that when the hundredth is discovered it will be full of gold. The masonry is rough-hewn, not dressed, and shows no signs of great age. The stones used are only of moderate dimensions, and the whole has more the appearance of being only three or four hundred years old than that of great antiquity.

Along the northern slopes of these hills there are many charming nooks, cool-shaded valleys with bright streams, the sea breaking in the many little coves and creeks of the shore close by—while beyond, the snow-clad hills of Asia Minor stand out clear.

Ascending the pass that leads to Nicosia, we look down on a broad brown plain without trees, that appears quite flat from the elevation

we are at. Villages are dotted about, with their white churches standing out conspicuously. Nicosia is seen in mid-plain, with cathedrals and minarets and patches of green; and beyond are the blue range of Makeras and Troados, with the Mount of the Holy Cross standing out by itself to the east.

Immediately below us is a band of shale hills about three miles wide, perfectly barren, and with very steep slopes: they are cut up by innumerable water-courses. The denudation that has formed them has been arrested by layers of almost vertical strata, sustaining the clayey soil at an angle of almost 45°. To the east, amongst these barren hills, appears a strip of brilliant green running out into the plain: this is Kethrea, one of the gems of Cyprus. Below the cliffs of the Pentadactylon a large spring gushes out of the rocks at an elevation of 850 feet above the sea. The spring is enclosed, in modern masonry, in a covered channel which collects the water from four different heads. The water is bright, clear, and slightly warm—67° Fahr. Rather more than four thousand gallons a minute are constantly supplied both summer and winter. The remains of an ancient aqueduct can be traced that once led the water to Salamis. Rushing down a steep valley in the shale hills, the water changes them up to a certain level into the most fertile banks, clothed with green of every hue, and covered with fruit-trees; above the water-line the hills remain the same barren, glaring, mud-coloured ridges, that seem to set off the green-like brightness of the valley they contain. Passing along innumerable aqueducts, covered with luxuriant fronds of maidenhair fern, turning over a score of mills, the streams find their way through thick groves of oranges, pomegranates, mulberries, and other

fruit-trees. Reaching the mouth of the valley the water is carried fan-like out on to the plain, fertilising the soil until every drop is expended. Houses cluster along the banks of the main streams, and as these spread on the plain, they form small villages, gradually becoming more distinct and separated.

Leaving Nicosia to the east, we cross the plain, passing the dried-up Pedias river. The plain is not so level as it appeared from above; ridges of flat rocks show a former elevation that has been swept away by the rains of centuries, only leaving islands here and there to show what was once the formation. Where the top crust remains all is bare and uncultivated, but where it is broken away by denudation the land is very fertile. Passing the fertile plain of Morphu on the west, we make straight for the hills below Mount Troados, whose glittering snow-clad top serves as a guide. Here we again come on rushing streams of water, groves of oranges and lemons, that make Leoka the noted orange-growing place in the island. Situated at the mouth of a valley a short distance from the sea, it is one of the most charming spots. The hills around are full of mineral wealth, and clothed with mighty pines; broad and fertile valleys lead from them to the plain below.

Advancing up the valley, with the rushing torrent at our feet, we come across villages perched on the steep slopes, resembling villages in Switzerland. Above, the hills are covered with vineyards. To the west the mountains get wilder, and the pine-forests grow larger and more dense. In this little explored country there is a mass of intricate valleys and steep slopes covered with trees. There are streams of water, and the ground in parts is clothed with luxuriant bracken-fern

under the lofty pines. Though much injured by burning for resin, they are still fine trees, and there are a good many young ones growing up to refill the spaces that have been cleared.

The mountaineers are very hospitable. They sprinkle our hands with rose-water, and bring out curious preserves of grapes and other sweets. Sometimes they burn olive-branches in a large spoon in front of us, as a preventive from the evil eye. The olive-branches have been hung up in the church for some time.

A narrow and steep path leads up to Troados or Olympus. From here we get a magnificent view of almost the whole island. The plain we have passed looks dim and misty below us. The northern range of mountains are blue, and appear to stretch away to the east beyond our range of sight. To the east and west, ranges of mountain-tops fill the space in the utmost confusion. To the west these tops are more densely wooded with dark pines than those to the east. Looking south over the Limasol and Papho districts, hill and valley seem to fill up the whole of the island. The hills are covered with scrub and sometimes with trees. A marked line can be clearly distinguished where the white chalk gives place to the dark metamorphosed rocks of which Troados is formed; and here the vineyards are seen covering the slopes in all directions. Towards the south-west a large white hill stands out prominently, crowned by a little chapel. This is the Panagia Khrisosogiotessa, a large Greek monastery, rivalling the great monastery of Kiku, which can also be seen in the pine-covered hills to our west. Over the Papho district the white chalky limestone seems to prevail. The valleys are large, and have streams of water in them irrigating

the lower slopes of the steep hills. The hills are greener, the grass forming in places a perfect turf. Numbers of horses and cattle are grazing, driven over from the parched plain to the north to feed on the luxuriant slopes of the Papho and Limasol hills.

We have had our eyes on Cyprus as a desirable position for some time. As early as October 1876, it appears something had been decided, for the innumerable and very bad maps of the island issued on linen from the War Office are all stamped with that date. Palestine, no doubt, was the great rival, had war broken out with Russia. We might have occupied the country which we must defend from invasion from the north; we might have constructed the works that would make the passes of the Lebanon inaccessible, and have prepared the position about Mount Carmel, the greatest battle-field of the world, for the final contest.

Directly "Peace with honour" prevailed, Cyprus carried the day. We know the advantages of a seagirt shore. No complications of holy sites and sentimental interests, no religious task of sending the Jew back and placing a king on the throne of Judah, tend to embarrass our occupation of the island.

The position of Cyprus was clearly seen to be almost perfect as a base of operations in Syria, and for influencing the reforms in Asia Minor.

So we have come to Cyprus, and some are horribly disgusted because it is not the seventh heaven promised by Mohammed to true believers. Had we been only looking for a charming climate, a delightful and healthy country, rich and prosperous, capable of paying us well

for taking possession of it, there is no doubt we might have chosen something nearer the Garden of Eden; but we should have been no better than freebooters, looting from the weak the richest jewels we could get hold of.

The great reasons for our coming should not be lost sight of—to influence the Turkish rule in Asia Minor for good, and to be capable of resisting any further encroachments from the north. Unless we see reforms carried out in Asia Minor, how can we answer the great Christian deliverer when he advances to lift the yoke from suffering Christians? We may know that the Muscovite yoke is twice as heavy as the Ottoman; still, fanatical Christians, as all Christians are in the East, will prefer a heavy yoke, put on by a master of their own faith, rather than a lighter burden imposed by the infidel Moslem.

The army of those who are to be our future allies should also be attended to. We know what splendid fighting material there is in the Turkish soldier. We also know their wants—good officers, discipline, and commissariat. By raising and maintaining a Turkish regiment in Cyprus, we could find out by experience the reforms necessary. It would become the training school for officers, who would be capable of carrying out the same reforms in Asia Minor; and in case of war, we should have men able to raise troops amongst the many warlike tribes of Syria and Asia Minor who would follow an English leader to the death.

By thus employing Cyprus we should make its possession politically of the vastest importance, and we should really possess the key of the East.

REATA; OR, WHAT'S IN A NAME.—PART V.

CHAPTER XVII.—CORRESPONDENCE.

“Ah! why
Should life all labour be?”
—*The Lotos-Eaters.*

NOT a word of tidings from Otto reached his regiment until a short telegram, dated Krakau, announced his immediate arrival. This telegram produced the effect of a small bomb; but mingled with the excitement there was an element of disappointment. Such a tame ending to an expedition which every one had invested with wonder and mystery was a palpable come-down, and there was a prevalent impression that Otto had somehow or other mismanaged the chances offered by Fortune. His appearance and manner on arriving did not tend to diminish this impression; neither did he seem inclined to satisfy the curiosity which some of his comrades displayed rather broadly. He volunteered no information, and answered all questions laconically.

The original arrangement had been that he was to go home to Steinbühl for a week or so on landing; but the long hours of reflection which he had had leisure for on the sea-voyage had ended by altering this intention. An invincible repugnance kept him from home just then, and a fear lest the secret of his love should be betrayed. Strange faces, or at least indifferent ones, would be the most congenial surroundings at this moment. It would be better to wait a little longer before encountering Arnold's calmly scrutinising gaze.

On the evening of his arrival Langenfeld said to him, over the supper-table, “I was out at Snyh-nice last week, and they all inquired

after you; I suppose you will be going there soon.”

“I have not the slightest intention of ever going there again,” was the unexpected reply, given with so much asperity that Langenfeld looked up in surprise from his *Rost-braten*, wondering what had come over his friend.

One moment of triumph Otto enjoyed. It was the moment when Maraquita was first led out to be submitted to his comrades' judgment. It was delightful to him to witness their undisguised surprise and loudly-spoken admiration. The sensation was all the pleasanter from its entire novelty; for until now Otto had never been in the position of possessing anything which could be a subject of envy to any one. With his keen appreciation of all the amenities and beauties of life, and his still keener appreciation of the wealth which can command them, this had been to him a sore trial. Added to this, he had a genuine love of horses; and often when some one amongst his comrades, more fortunate than he, was parading a new acquisition, Otto had thought with bitter mortification that his turn would never come. And now it had come so brilliantly. Good horses were scarce, and the money to procure them still scarcer, and it had been long since a horse of Maraquita's stamp had belonged to any one in the regiment.

“I knew she would make a sensation,” he said to himself, triumphantly, a hundred times that forenoon. “How fortunate it is that she

is not to be buried alive at Steinhühl!"

Sweeter to him still than the general admiration of the regiment was the triumph of casting his enemy in the shade. Hitherto Captain Kreislich, as the moneyed man of the regiment, had never seen his horses rivalled; but to-day even he was obliged, half grudgingly, to own that he was outdone. As it was, he strained all his ingenuity to lessen Otto's victory.

"I am not sure that she is *quite* the colour I should have chosen myself." Then, as a brighter thought struck him, "But her pedigree; how about that? Are you sure it is all right?"

"All right! Of course it is all right; but it is not written on paper."

"No written pedigree?" inquired the Captain, with a tone of well-expressed disgust in his voice.

"No written pedigree," repeated Otto, calmly; "and I should like to know what use it would be. You have only got to look at her."

"Oh, of course, of course," said the other, in a calmly irritating tone; "I didn't mean that; but only, you know, in case of selling, it might make a difference."

"I shall never sell her as long as I live," said Otto, hotly, as he went up to Maraquita and stroked her glossy neck. He was thinking of things they could not guess at.

"Oh, I beg your pardon," drawled Kreislich; "but it was only natural, you know, to think that you might have some object of the sort."

Some passages taken from the letters which passed between Otto and Reata, and a few extracts from her diary, will be the best illustration at this period.

At Hamburg Otto had despatched a budget of twelve pages, of which I shall only quote the two last.

" . . . My darling, now that that wearisome journey is behind me, I feel that I should like to step on to the next ship, and go through it all again, in order to get back to you; the weariness and the discomfort would be delightful to bear, thinking of my reward at the end. I feel as if I had been a fool, Reata, to leave you and come back here alone. I ought never to have gone from your side, after once I knew you loved me. What, after all, are all the objections my aunt would have made? I should have spoken at once, and openly, and brought you home with me as my wife. You do not think me guilty of cowardice, do you, darling, for acting as I did? And yet I have been a coward; my love has made a coward of me. I did not dare to risk my happiness at one blow. Reata, my own beautiful Reata, forgive me; for my weakness is but the strength of my love.

"There are reasons which might induce my aunt to oppose my marriage, and she might refuse to come to Europe with you; or, what would be far worse, she might, in the long months you are together, use her influence against me. For these reasons I dared not speak; and for these reasons you must see how necessary it is that my aunt should not know our secret yet. . . .

"I tremble when I think of all the chances and accidents of life, and of the distance which lies between us. And again, at moments it seems as if you were so near me. I have only to put up my hand over my eyes, and I can see you before me, as I saw you last, in your white dress, with the great green leaves of the creepers drooping over you; and those eyes, which it maddens me to think of, filled with tears. . . .

"You will come, will you not, darling, at Christmas? I know you will come, but I want you to

assure me of it, and tell it me again when you write. . . .

"Try and keep the old lady in good humour, and make her stick to her promise ; but be discreet, and don't let her suspect what an interest you have in the matter. . . ."

From Reata to Otto.

"July 4th.

"DEAREST OTTO,—Do you know that during this last week I have found out something quite new? Shall I tell you what? I have found out that this place here, and the prairie, and the forest, even my own forest, can be very dull and lonely.

"When I think of the time before you came, it seems to me that I was much more easily satisfied than now ; I know that I was quite content with my forest. It is all your fault ; I found that out a few days ago, and I almost felt angry with you for having disturbed my peace. Not for very long, though ; so don't get angry in your turn. I like the change better on the whole. I am not the same Reata I was five weeks ago ; and oh, Otto, I never, never dreamt that there could be such happiness in the world!

"Are you as happy as I am? Will you swear to me that nothing could add to your happiness at this moment? And, above all, tell me again and again that you love me only for my sake—that you would not love me a whit more for all the riches of the world. . . .

Yesterday in the forest I met such a beautiful beetle on a cactus-leaf ; it had red horns and yellow legs, and it reminded me so much of you,—no, don't laugh—there really was something in its expression that was like yours ; but for that I would have taken it home with me. As it was, I had not the

heart to rob it of its liberty, so I opened my fingers and let it fly, and it went straight up to the highest leaves of the palm-trees, as if it were glad to get released. You will never be glad to get released, will you, Otto? No, I know you won't. Only that beetle was *so* like you! . . .

"Remember, I must have the photographs you promised me ; your own, and your brother's, and your sister's, and your father's. I want to get familiar with their faces before I see them. Tell me all, every word they said when you told them. Were they very much surprised? or shocked? or disgusted? Do they think you foolish? Do they expect me to be an untamed savage? I may perhaps seem to them a little wild at first ; but really I am not as bad as I look ; and then—oh yes, is not your brother Arnold, in especial, horrified at having a sister-in-law who is beneath him in rank? You told me he was so very aristocratic in all his ideas. Do you think he will ever be able to get reconciled to me? . . .

"Do you remember how we disputed that morning about those ballads? It was before I had a notion that you would ever be anything to me. I had no idea then that you would be my own true knight ; for you are my own true knight, are you not, Otto? and you would fetch me a whole packet of gloves, wouldn't you, from under the noses of any amount of wild animals!

"I think—yes, I am sure—your love for me would have strength to stand a trial. . . . Ortega is standing on his head outside the veranda, waiting for my letter ; so I must wind up, as I think he ought to be discouraged. He is going to ride in to E— on 'the Bony One.'

"When you write, tell me how often you think of me; tell me anything about yourself; tell me how you are looking, what you are doing: I care to hear about it all. Write very, very soon to your own

"REATA."

"P.S.—I must just let Ortega stand on his head a little longer, while I put this in. Remember your photograph must be in full uniform; I insist upon that. Tell me whether Maraquita has stood the journey well.

"P.P.S.—Will your father or Gabrielle write to me? I should like it so much."

Otto to Reata.

"August 5th.

"MY OWN ANGEL!—The sight of your handwriting was like a glimpse of heaven to me; the first letter from you, Reata! How I have sighed for it through all those weary days! I knew it could not come sooner, in the common course of things; but I was unreasonably impatient—wanting a token to tell me that my happiness was a reality, not merely a golden dream that had passed. . . . And I am greatly in want of comfort and solacement just at present; we are at the height of our autumn manoeuvres, and, as bad luck would have it, one of the captains has fallen ill suddenly, and his squadron has been handed over to me for a couple of weeks or so, so that I am as hard-worked as a galley-slave. Fancy going out every morning at six, and being out in the heat of the day, shouting at a lot of idiots, and getting shouted at by still greater idiots; and then, at half-past eleven, returning all hot and dusty to a bad dinner! And then, when that is over, there are no 'hours of peace' for me, no pleasant lounging in a hammock; but I have to rush off and visit barracks, or

write reports, or superintend the breaking-in of the young horses. Military life is a very hard one, certainly, in this wretched country; and more so still for a married man. How will you like it, my darling, after we are married, often not seeing me for half the day—sometimes not till the evening? and then my coming home tired and dusty in summer, and tired and muddy in winter, too much worn out to speak even to you?

"Dearly as I love you, or rather because I so dearly love you, I sometimes shudder at the notion of bringing you into all the worries and hardships of this life, which I have learnt to know so well, but of which you cannot possibly conceive any true idea. How should you, my bright angel, living like an enchanted princess in the midst of your palm-groves, surrounded with sunshine and flowers, know what I mean when I speak of these things, or guess at the prosaic miseries of a life like mine?

"I will go a little further, and say something more; for I must be open with you, my own and only treasure; and do I not know that our love cannot be shaken by anything? I *had* hoped that the provisions in my uncle's will, or if not, my aunt's generosity, should enable me to leave the army. If this hope was strong at the time I left Europe, it grew tenfold stronger after I became attached to you; for what man, having won such a treasure, would not like to give up his whole life to the enjoyment of it? Every moment after the one that makes you mine should be devoted all and entirely to the happiness of possessing and adoring you. I know now that this cannot be; because the hope I have just referred to has not been fulfilled.

"As yet I have avoided any references to money matters, or to

our prospects of fortune; but there is no good to be gained by this. I do not know how far you may be aware of the contents of my uncle's will—it is useless to enter into that subject now; enough to say, that by the provisions therein contained, I will have a yearly income of two thousand florins—a sum sufficient to enable a single man to live independently, but which, even when added to your annuity, would, without my pay, be too miserable a pittance to enable us to live with any comfort and enjoyment of life. So that, calculate and count as I may, I always return to the same conclusion, and that is, that my remaining in the army is a matter of positive necessity. My miserable eight hundred florins of pay seem hardly worth considering, but the next year or two must see me captain; and, humiliating as the thought may be, there is no use in denying that the twelve hundred florins will make some difference in our lives. . . .

“That round of duties which I find irksome even now, how hard will they seem when I have to leave you for them! They say that a married officer must choose between being a bad officer or a bad husband: it is an easy choice for me; rather, a thousand times rather, will I sacrifice every consideration of military duty, than neglect the idol which I adore with such passionate devotion. . . .

“What a number of questions you ask about my family! And, darling, don't be disappointed at what I am going to say, but I have thought it best, after consideration, not to tell them about our engagement. There are many reasons for this course, some reasons which I cannot enter on with you at present. Let it remain a secret till the time when you come home with my aunt, and then any objection which could

possibly be raised must vanish of itself when they see you. . . .

“In the midst of my fatigues and worries, a momentary triumph came to brighten me the other day. Maraquita, who has made quite a sensation in the regiment, was marked out by attention from high quarters. We were getting reviewed by the commanding-general T—, one of the most distinguished officers of our cavalry; and his practised eye was at once attracted by Maraquita. He sent for me immediately after the review, and asked me no end of questions about her, and finally asked if I would part with her. He was very much in earnest, and pressed me on the point, going as far as two thousand florins in his offers, which is a fabulous sum to give for a horse here. I think the others all thought me mad for refusing; but how could I dream of parting with anything that was your gift? For I will consider her your gift; I cannot think of it in any other way. Was it not by your persuasion that my aunt consented to make her over to me, instead of to Arnold? And, by the by, now that I think of it, it is very lucky that that plan was changed; for I am almost sure that Maraquita would be too light to carry him well. She is perfectly up to my weight; but you know I told you that Arnold is a different build altogether—quite a heavy-dragon stamp of man. . . .”

Reata to Otto.

“September 18th.

“MY OWN OTTO!—What is the use of asking me not to be disappointed? Of course I am disappointed, horribly disappointed, at your not telling your family. I had looked forward so much to hearing what they said, and I had half hoped for a letter from some of them.

"I didn't like your letter very much this time; in fact, it put me into a rage, but I won't speak about that just now. The photographs I liked more; you know I have seen very few photographs at all, and these were different from common ones to me. I had thought about them so much, and about what their faces would be like, that I had got pictures in my mind; and quite wrong ones it turns out now. Your father is very unlike my idea; there is a great resemblance to you; and now that I have seen his face, I think I quite understand his writing all that about withered roses and foaming torrents.

"Gabrielle's photograph frightened me; she looks so delicate, like a figure of transparent china you can almost see through. Then comes your heavy-dragoon brother; and there I was not so much mistaken. His eyebrows *are* very bushy, and he has too much the air of a high-nosed aristocrat; but for all that I like him—I like him very much. There is something of grandness in his face, which I don't know how to explain.

"Your photograph I nearly burnt, after I had looked at it: not because it is bad, or unlike you—it is like you to a certain extent—but because it is not good enough for you. You are much better-looking than that; you were handsomer, even at the time you had that horrid beard. I ought not to have asked for your photograph at all; no photograph will ever make you look like the picture in my memory. I do not like this face on paper, which will not look at me, or smile at me, in the way you used to do. . . .

"One of the things in your letter which put me into a rage was all those complaints about having much to do, and about riding and shout-

ing, and coming home dusty. No, Otto, don't frown—I can see you frowning and biting your lip across all the oceans and the lands between us; but I really am angry, and I mean to tell you so. I think a soldier's calling is the highest and the noblest one in the world; if I were a man I would be a soldier myself; and how can you talk about shedding blood, and getting shot for your country, if you go on complaining about such miserable trifles?"

("I'll be hanged if I ever was fool enough to talk about shedding my blood!" had been Otto's comment on reading this passage.)

"I can't pity you, even if I tried ever so hard, about all those things you talk about. I see nothing dreadful in going out at six, or in coming back at half-past eleven; I can imagine nothing more delightful than being five hours in the saddle; it is the very thing I should do from choice myself. Neither do I like your theory about bad husbands and bad officers; it is a fallacy. Of course you shall be a good husband; but you shall certainly not be a bad officer—I could not stand that. And I mean to be an excellent officer's wife. What do you take me for, Otto? What sort of metal do you think I am made of, not to be proof against such miserable little annoyances, which you yourself call *petty*?"

"Oh, you don't know me; I could do so much, I could sacrifice everything I care for, for the man I love. And I love you, my darling Otto—I love you; and I have never loved any one else in this world—except, of course, Fícha and the Giraffe. . . .

"I don't like hearing a man complain of things which should be beneath his notice; he ought to put up with very much rather than

that. But now, when I think of it, I should not like you to act upon this principle; for then you would not tell me everything you feel, and that would not do at all. . . .

"I may not have very much idea about the value of money—you have told me so so often that I must believe you; but yet I do think of that sometimes, and when I said just now that I mean to be a good officer's wife I was not talking vaguely. Why should we not live and be happy upon three thousand florins? I am sure lots of people do. As long as I am sure of your love, it would take much less to make me happy, I know. . . .

"I wonder whether your country will be very different from what I expect. You have told me a great deal about it; but some of my ideas are sure to be wrong. There are moments when I feel a sort of strange dread at leaving this land.

"The other day, in an old book of Mr Boden's, I came across a Mexican tale of a palm-tree, which was taken to Europe and planted in the soil there; but it missed the hot sun, and would not grow, but drooped, and withered away till it was dead.

"Might I not wither like that palm-tree? I know what you will say; that I am not to take foolish notions into my head—and I will not, if I can help it. It was only a fancy. . . .

"Your aunt cannot write to you—I cannot even get her to dictate a letter; indeed she is not very strong. You can explain this to your father and brother in case they should be surprised at her silence.

"I have something else to say too; perhaps I ought to have begun with it. She will not be able to go to Europe in winter, as had been arranged—it is her health, and also other reasons; and oh, Otto, if she does not go, how can I? How can

I come to you at the time we had settled? It would be hardly three months off now, if everything had remained as we had planned it; but it has not remained.

"I know how this will grieve you, Otto, for you have been counting the weeks till my coming; but it is quite, quite impossible—at least quite impossible for the Giraffe to come; and I suppose I could not come alone. Of course, if you wished it very much, I could go to Europe by myself; but perhaps this would not be quite a proper proceeding, would it? It is difficult for me to judge about this; you know how ignorant I am about all your forms and customs. It is for you to decide, and I leave everything in your hands.

"I am very much afraid that you will find it wiser for us to wait. The Giraffe might possibly come next autumn; but very likely only the following Christmas. So if you do not think that I can come home alone, we must make up our minds to put off everything till then. It will be a year, more than a year, most probably—a long, long time to wait! Must we wait, Otto? Remember, I leave everything in your hands.

"When will your answer come? It is stupid of me to ask, for I know it cannot come for eight weeks; and during all those eight weeks I will not know whether I am to see you very soon, or not for another year. . . ."

Reata's diary has been casually referred to once previously; and before the reader is allowed to penetrate into its mysteries, it is absolutely necessary to give him a brief sketch of this extraordinary volume. I say it is necessary, because no one uninitiated could form anything like a true idea of what it was like.

To most rational people, a young lady's diary—and more so still, an *engaged* young lady's diary—is a thing of intense weariness; the concentrated essence of insipid sentiment, silly or overstrained, according to the character of the writer, which only the blessed secrecy enveloping it prevents from becoming a social infliction—something to be shuddered at in theory, skipped in novels, and flown from in real life.

And yet, reader, I have the courage to give here extracts from a young lady's diary—an *engaged* young lady's diary—and the audacity to ask that you should not skip them.

Reata's diary was anything but a diary; it had none of the characteristics of a diary, and it certainly was conducted on principles which diaries in general have little to do with. Perhaps it might be called a scrap-book with more correctness; but if the truth must be told, its original vocation had been that of a volume of chronological tables, which must once have been the property of the Giraffe in her girlish days, for it bore the name of Olivia Bodenbach on the first page, and a date of some thirty-six years back. Reata had come across the volume lying by in a corner, neglected and covered with dust, and had taken possession of it for her own purposes. There were titles written, and dates marked, and columns drawn, on most of the pages, and five or six of the chronological tables were on the verge of completion—or rather, had once been on the verge of completion; for the reigning sovereigns whose names were to have figured on these pages had little chance now of ever coming into their rights. It was a big fat book, massively bound in dark-green leather, rather the worse for wear and tear and a good deal of

knocking about the world, but looking as if it would take a good deal more knocking about before it would consent to fall to pieces. The inside was about half-full at the time I write; the blank pages opposite the historical tables were scribbled and sketched upon, or had photographs or prints or dried flowers pasted on them. There were jottings inside the columns, and impertinent little outlines of Fficha's profile intruding themselves on to the very names of kings and redoubtable warriors.

Into this book Reata was accustomed, at long intervals, to write down some of her ideas—the frequency of such occurrences being usually regulated more by rainy days and unemployed evenings than by the importance of the events to be recorded. It had been so at least until lately; but during the last three months, and especially since her separation from Otto, Reata, experiencing in her solitude a greater need of companionship, had had recourse to her scrap-book much more frequently. As said before, these scribblings, and her arrangements generally, were done, as a rule, with utter disregard of the kings and warriors; but now and then, these first possessors of the soil, encroached upon and disregarded as they were, would weave themselves, sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously, into her written thoughts.

Here was Otto's photograph opposite to the name of *Bayard*, and the battle of Rebec, 1524; and under it, written in a bold, proud hand, "*My chevalier, sans peur et sans reproche.*"

The other photographs she had stuck in wherever there was a vacant place; and fate had bestowed Arnold next to the Massacre of St Bartholomew, while Gabrielle and her father had found

places among the "*chief ornaments of the Church under Henri IV.*"

The rest of the column was filled up with writing.

"September 18th.

"I thought I should have no peace till that letter was gone; and now that it is gone, I should like to have it back. If Ortega had not been so precipitate I might have had it back; how often have I told him not to gallop down that steep rocky road!

"I would have torn open the letter again, and stroked out half I have said, and told him instead that I will come to Europe at any price, rather than put off his happiness and mine. My own Otto! My poor Otto! I have been too hard upon him. I will not see his face when he reads it, but I know so well how disappointed he will look. Not exactly disappointed either—that is not the right word; for he never will accede to my proposal. How angry he will be with me for having even thought or dreamt that it was possible! I know him so well that I could almost guess the words of his answer. I shall just put them down, to show him some day how clever I am:—

"My one Treasure and only Love!—How can you suggest such barbarous ideas! Put off our marriage for a year! Never, while my heart beats. Have I not told you that the time without you is an aching void? How could I live through it if it were prolonged?

"No, a thousand times no; you belong to me, Reata, and I claim you. Perish the squeamish conventionalities of civilised countries! Come to me, my adored angel; I and my whole family shall wait for you at the port, and there, morning, noon, and night, we will pray on our bended knees that the ship which carries my treasure may be safely guided!

"But if you shrink from the lonely journey, breathe but one word, and I will rush across the ocean to your feet! I will claim you, I will ravish you if necessary; but I will not consent to wait—not one day, not one hour, not one minute, O Reata!' &c., &c. . . .

"Not a moment of peace or quiet till his answer comes. I feel so dreadfully, so horribly anxious! What will he say? No use in composing answers; I must see it in his own hand before I am at peace. . . .

"Will he be true to me? It must be a hard trial for any man's constancy, to choose between me and a fortune. He thinks I don't know; he little dreams that I know every line of the will better than he does himself. . . . And he is so afraid of my telling the Giraffe! What would he say if he knew that I had told her long ago? Poor Giraffe! He does not know what a friend to his interests he has in her—the very best that could be. . . .

"I wonder if I am doing wrong! Oh that I could begin all over again! These mysteries, these mysteries! . . . I will not draw back. . . . Happy poverty! how I bless you!—the only true test of a man's love. But I do not doubt his love; it is wicked of me to think such thoughts. I deserve to lose him; but I will not lose him, I cannot lose him. He will be true to me; my own poor Otto, how could I doubt him? My own *chevalier, sans peur et sans reproche.*"

Here the writing was broken off hastily, and a suspicious round mark had fallen on the paper, blotting out the record of Mazarin's death in 1661.

Perhaps a tear consecrated to the great statesman's memory.

CHAPTER XVIII.—THE SKETCH-BOOK.

"The bond that links our souls together;
Will it last through stormy weather?"

—A. PROCTER.

The four letters from which passages have been quoted were of course not the only ones which during these three months had passed between the Bodenbachs and Mexico. Besides two letters from the old Baron to his "dearest and most beloved cousin Olivia," there had been one from Arnold to his aunt. No direct answers had come to any of these; only a message through Otto, who wrote, saying that he had heard from his aunt, and that she sent excuses for her silence, under the plea of various somewhat incongruous reasons. He gave no more definite explanation of how and when exactly he had heard from Mexico, entirely confining himself to vague messages.

In his first letter from Rzeszów, he had written a pretty full account of his visit—that is to say, of what he meant to let them know of his visit; and he had also announced to them the fact that his aunt intended to pass the following Christmas in Europe. All this was not very satisfactory, however, and the family at Steinbühl were not satisfied. Arnold, in especial, who from the first had been inclined to view the Mexican connection with mistrust, had an undefined feeling that something was being kept back from them. What, he could not imagine. It could hardly be anything about the money; for that point was made perfectly clear in the most satisfactory manner: first, by the evidence of the will, which no one could doubt, and which, soon after Otto's return, had been forwarded to Europe by

the firm of Le Vendeur & Co.; and secondly, by the due remittance of the sums now due to Arnold and Otto, as being of age, and a year having elapsed since Maximilian Bodenbach's death, as well as the ten thousand florins legacy to the old Baron. About the larger sum, too, the interest of which was to be theirs under that one condition which the reader is acquainted with, there could be no earthly ground for entertaining doubts. Nothing could be more distinct and to the point.

"But why," reasoned Arnold, "does my aunt keep so strangely aloof from any references to this matter; shirking correspondence with us, almost as if wanting to disclaim connection with the whole business?"

When Otto, on his return from Mexico, instead of at once presenting himself before his eagerly expectant family, according to the original arrangement, buried himself unseen in his Polish station, there had been, as was only natural, great discomposure and displeasure at Steinbühl.

"So thoughtless of Otto," said the old Baron, fretfully; "when he knew that I wanted to ask him so many things about Olivia, and whether she ever alluded to the picnic with the donkeys."

"So unkind of Otto," said Gabrielle, sobbing; "and he promised to bring me flower-seeds and palm-leaves."

Arnold did not say what he thought, but he was himself much provoked at this ridiculous idea of Otto's, and hurt by what seemed to

him a want of family affection and of brotherly confidence.

Gradually, however, these different feelings calmed down, and were superseded by quiet exultation at the successful issue of the visit ; and gradually also they began to lose their first keen interest in the personality of the Mexican aunt, once regarded as the possible bequeather of fortunes—but who, as as it appeared now, was powerless. Should she die to-morrow, her death could not in any possible manner influence them materially, and her immense riches must pass into strange hands. Aunt Olivia had, it is true, held out hopes of spending the next Christmas with them at Steinbühl ; and the old Baron did write two affectionate letters, pressing his dear cousin to be true to her promise : but he also was discouraged by her continued silence.

In spite of this minor disappointment, Baron Walther was perhaps the one of the family who got the most happiness out of the whole transaction. He had struggled so long with poverty, and had been for so many years a prey to anxiety on his children's account, that this sudden lightening of all his cares went near to upset his mind with delight. He did not want riches for himself ; but he wanted to die knowing that his children would not starve. He thoroughly approved of uncle Max's conditions ; they coincided perfectly with his own principles. He had married a *bourgeoise*, it is true, for the sake of money, but only to obey his father and redeem their fortunes ; now his sons, more lucky than himself, would gain a fortune by marrying their equals. And then, how beautifully everything fitted to existing circumstances ! Arnold would marry Hermine, and Otto would marry Comtesse Halka, and Ga-

brielle in her turn would marry some delightful Baron or Count, and everybody would be happy.

Arnold also was highly satisfied with his uncle's condition, and more thoroughly than anybody else, endorsed his sentiments about purity of blood, &c. Of course for him the condition was superfluous ; for even had not habit and inclination pointed to Hermine as the only woman he could think of as his wife, he never could have dreamt of bestowing himself upon any one his inferior in rank. About Otto, his mind was not quite easy—for Otto never had professed any pride of blood ; and from what Arnold knew of his brother, he felt certain that those sentiments which he himself admired in uncle Max, would not fail to excite Otto's disgust. Of course, should Otto remain unmarried, the fortune would be his equally ; but here again Arnold knew his brother too well. He was not the man to remain a bachelor ; he had been in love half-a-dozen times, and was certain not to keep clear of matrimony for long. Therefore, when two months and a half had passed since his brother's return, and there had been no signs forthcoming of the advancement of Otto's suit, his letters never even mentioning the name of Comtesse Halka, Arnold became anxious, and took fright that his brother was playing fast and loose with the Polish heiress.

About the beginning of October he expressed some of these fears in a conversation he had with Hermine one sunny day, in the old summer-house.

Between these two the friendship was growing steadily and surely day by day. On her side calm adoration, and quiet expectancy of a happiness that could not fail to come ; on his, an ever-in-

creasing feeling of reliance, which promised well for their future happiness. All the same, the change in his fortunes did not for a moment move him to accelerate the time of his engagement. Arnold had an intense dislike to changing his mind upon any point, when once made up. He had said it was to be in June, and in June it should be ; not a month sooner, or all his ideas would be upset.

On this October afternoon Hermine had inquired what news there had been in Otto's letter of the morning ; and Arnold, after answering her questions, had looked thoughtful for a moment, and then said, "I am not quite easy, though, about him ; his letters lately have not satisfied me."

"Why, is there anything to make you uneasy in his letters ?" she had asked.

"It is what isn't in his letters that makes me uneasy."

Hermine's eyes had opened wide at this enigmatical explanation ; and then Arnold had expounded his views on the subject of the Polish Comtesse.

"I can't make out what he is waiting for, or why he is so reticent about his own plans. He has not breathed a word of his intentions—whether he means to quit the service at once, or to continue in the army ; he has independent means enough now to live without his pay," Arnold had continued, winding up by saying that his mind would never thoroughly be at rest until Otto was safely established in the matrimonial state.

"Riches have got a powerful charm for him ; but Otto's is a character which no human being on earth can count upon," he had gone on to say. "You know Otto ; but I don't think you know him as I do. He is anything but a strong character, and yet one which is

most difficult to manage ; and he is difficult to manage because he is so easy to influence. I don't know how to define it differently."

Arnold had stood with his heavy eyebrows drawn together, and a distant look in his eyes, as if striving to give shape to his own meaning, or reading down his thoughts from off the far-off clouds—Hermine gazing up at him with boundless faith in every word he said, but not half grasping this delineation of his brother's character.

"You see," he had gone on, "Otto is formed on a wrong principle altogether for a man ; he has the nervous sensibility of a woman. It has been so with him since he was a child—constitutional, I suppose ; for he has had the same bringing up that I have. He is too impressionable to outward things ; too easily swayed by the circumstances of the moment ; too keenly alive to the influence of beauty, under whatever shape it takes for the time. Put him in the hands of a pretty woman, and he is wax ; she can do with him what she likes—as long as she holds him : but let him be in the hands of a clever woman, and she will make him into clay, by knowing how to preserve the impression when once made. I don't know if you can quite grasp my meaning, Hermine ?"

Hermine had not grasped his meaning at all, but had smiled placidly, allowing him to proceed.

"Otto *must* have a clever wife—a woman with some spirit, who knows how to manage him. Not at all what would suit me ; I can't put up with those independent women who are always thinking and acting for themselves ; but for him it is a positive necessity : and I think that Comtesse Halka, with all her calmness, is just the right sort of woman to guide him."

Here Arnold, having worked himself into a state of considerable excitement, had begun pacing about in a way which made the old deal flooring of the summer-house creak under his tread, and its old rickety roof shake over his head; and, after three or four turns, had sat down again and explained to Hermine, for the fourth time that afternoon, that he would never know a moment's peace until Otto had put it out of his own power to go against that all-important clause in uncle Max's will, by making a suitable marriage. From which it will be seen that Hermine had already been made acquainted with the terms of the will.

"Does Otto care for the Comtesse?" she had asked in her matter-of-fact way.

Care for her! quite a new view of the question—an irrelevant one, which Arnold had never considered.

Why will women always come out with that question first, when there is the talk of a marriage?

Arnold knew that his brother had cared for various women in turns—some of whom he had wanted, and some of whom he had not wanted, to marry; but it never occurred to him that love was at all a necessity in marrying. Therefore he had replied something to the effect that he did not suppose Otto was fool enough not to care for a person so evidently cut out for him. "Of course," Arnold had added, "one cannot expect people who have known each other for only two years, to care for each other as much as those who have been intimate all their lives."

At this Hermine had coloured, and looked down without answering.

The result of this conversation was, that Arnold, after taking another day to think over the matter, came to the conclusion that

his duty as an elder brother demanded of him to write to Otto and touch him up. A brotherly word at the right moment might serve to push on matters wonderfully.

This letter reached Otto by the same post which brought to him that second one from Reata, which has already been given. His brother's he tossed aside, and hers he opened eagerly. There were signs of great disturbance on his face as he ran through its contents; but whether of anger, grief, or doubt, was not clear. He exclaimed several times, he shifted his position, he sprang up at last and began walking up and down. Then, when he had grown a little quieter, he read his brother's letter, and then he leant his head on his hands, thinking deeply.

Why must these two things come together? Unpleasant things always do. These two letters—the one a blow, the other a bore. Yes, Arnold was a decided bore. Why could he not leave alone things he knew nothing about? Arnold always had an inclination to preach and give good advice, and Otto had no patience for good advice. What was all this he said now? and Otto took up the letter again and read:—

"You won't mind my speaking openly, I hope; but I cannot imagine why you should go on trailing out the matter for so long—ever since last winter. There can be no reason for postponement: the Comtesse is old enough to know her own mind; and now, with your altered prospects, there is no need of fearing a refusal, as might before have been the case. I can see that my father counts upon your marriage as a certainty, and looks for the announcement in each of your letters. I cannot think what is keeping you back."

"I should think he cannot," Otto remarked aloud, half impatiently.

"There is nobody I know"—the letter went on—"who is more perfectly suited to you than the Comtesse: her education and refinement are just such as you look for in a woman; besides which, she is clever and eminently high-bred,—the very woman to make you happy."

Otto passed his hand over his forehead. "Ah! it is easy for him to talk; he has not seen *her*, that other woman!"

The letter went on:—

"It certainly seems as if good-luck had come to our family at last. Fortunate, is it not, that uncle Max did not think of inventing harder conditions? Don't you remember that conversation we had in the Café Schaum? You were very anxious to leave the army then, and now you can have your wish, and most of your other wishes will be fulfilled too.

"Let me advise you again to make haste. Why should not everything be settled before winter? so that you should be able to escape the drudgery of winter service, which I know you so much dislike."

Otto put down the paper, and burst into a loud laugh. Not a pleasant laugh to listen to, nor suggestive of merriment; rather I should call it a dreary laugh, if such an expression is allowable.

When he had done laughing, he commenced abusing his brother.

"So unfeeling of Arnold, such want of tact; positively block-headed! harrowing me by these pictures. Bad enough already to lose a fortune like that; but a fellow does not always want to be reminded of it. All very well for him; he will marry his great heavy Hermine, and get all his money, and doesn't care a hang whether I and Reata will be beggars!"

Then came another mood. The force of logic began regaining some ground in his mind, making him

more just towards his brother. After all, Arnold was not quite as blockheaded as at first sight appeared.

"Supposing, for argument's sake, that I had not gone to Mexico; and if it had not been for those three thousand florins, Arnold would have gone. There would have been no danger of a cold fellow like him falling in love with her. I never would have met that adorable being; and then, I daresay, I might have been content with Halka. In that case I should have cut the army at once, and gone to live at Vienna, and enjoyed life a little. But having once seen her, and being the happy man who has gained her love, everything else seems a trifle in comparison. It is *not* a trifle, though," Otto said aloud, in an angry tone, as if disputing the point with some one, "to lose a fortune of a hundred and seventy thousand florins!"

The worst of it was, that Arnold would not let himself be quieted easily. Having once got this idea into his head, he would be certain to return to the charge; and how make him hold his tongue, and yet remain unsuspecting? Of course, to begin with, the letter can remain unanswered for a month; but after that, what? For Otto was resolved to maintain the secrecy as long as possible. There was something in his nature which made him shrink from anything disturbing, and the first word he let fall of his engagement must necessarily provoke a great disturbance. If he *was* to be a victim to his grand-uncle's ridiculous ideas about race, at least let him have peace and quiet till the moment came. Supposing he were now to say to his family, "I am going to marry a girl who is not of noble birth, and therefore I am going to give up my fortune," peace would be at an end for him. There

would be his father entreating, and being plaintive; there would be Arnold reasoning, and Gabrielle crying, without knowing what it was all about: in short, there they would all be worrying him out of his senses, and making him feel his sacrifice with tenfold keenness. Yes, the moment of disclosure would be a very stormy one, he knew, and he shuddered at the prospect. It was not far off now; at least, so it had seemed until to-day—until this letter from Reata. What if he were to yield to reason, and consent to the delay she suggested? It would be procrastination of his happiness, but also of many worries; and Otto loved to put off worries. Who could tell what might not turn up in a year? A year was a long time, as Reata said; and here Otto sighed heavily, and taking up her letter with a sudden impulse, kissed it passionately.

For two days many thoughts worked and fermented in his mind, and on the third he wrote this answer:—

“October 20th.

“MY DEAREST,—I have taken two days to consider what you tell me. I looked at the matter in every light, and the conclusion I have come to is, I think, the best.

“Yes, my darling, I fear that you are right. I did not want to see it at first, but reflection has made me wiser. There is no help for it but to defer our happiness, and to resign ourselves with patience to a longer separation than we had at first contemplated.

“Of course you could not come alone. It would be very disagreeable, and even highly improper. I could not stand the thought that you should be exposed to the annoyances of a long sea-voyage alone.

You do not realise the unpleasant accidents which you, by your youth and beauty, might be exposed to. As for me, you cannot expect me to come. I have told you how difficult it is to get more leave at present; and even should I succeed in obtaining it, you, my darling, would be the last to wish that I should take advantage of it, when I tell you that it would in most likelihood injure my promotion—a thing I could not afford to do. Besides, you know, Reata, I am, alas! a poor man; and although the generosity of my aunt spared me the expense of last journey, it is not likely or fair to expect that she should do so again, especially as I more than suspect that she will be against the object of my coming. I could not blame her for it either; her opposition would be no more than what I must make up my mind to expect from all my relations.

“Patience, my own Reata—patience. It is a hard word, and I feel it as hardly as you do; but, as you say, it is the wisest course.

“Everything points this way. Who knows whether in a year my prospects may not brighten? and at any rate I will, in a not much longer space of time, gain my rank of captain, as it seems that I am destined not to quit this wretched service. Possibly, also, my promotion may bring a change of station, and cast me in a place where life will be a little more endurable than here. . . . The recollection of you will be the only thing to lighten the heavy time of work. You will think of me daily, will you not, my darling? And you will let me hear from you by every mail. . . . I think I can easily explain what you call the grandeur in Arnold's face; you would soon lose that impression if you knew him as well as I do. It all consists in his bushy

eyebrows and beard. About his marriage, I believe it is to be some time or other next summer—about June or so. The engagement is not declared, but my father wrote to me something of the sort."

Otto carried this letter to the post himself. He was very careful to prevent any suspicions arising amongst his comrades, and therefore he preferred that they should not know how often he wrote to Mexico.

As he was on his way back he was hailed across the *Place* by a red-faced lieutenant, who rejoiced in the unmelodious name of *Schweiner*. What *Schweiner* wanted at this particular moment was a book of military regulations, entitled '*Praktischer Leitfaden zu der richtigen Behandlung des rohen Recruten*,' and belonging to a class of military literature which every Austrian officer is supposed to have at his finger-ends.

Schweiner explained to Otto, as he joined him, that his own copy of the work had been severely mutilated and rendered illegible by repeated worryings on the part of his two terriers, and that he had been begging about for the book everywhere in vain.

"Mine is heaven knows where. I haven't seen it for months: it may be under my press or behind it, for aught I know; but you can look for yourself, as long as you don't bother me about it."

Answering to this cordial invitation, *Schweiner* at once proceeded to ransack his comrade's apartment. There were not many books there; only the unavoidable military ones I have referred to, two or three French novels, and half-a-dozen other miscellaneous books. They all lay on the top of each other, and it was impossible to find out

what was at the bottom without pulling to pieces the whole untidy heap.

This, *Schweiner* proceeded to do vigorously; while Otto stood at the window, half leaning out, lazily puffing his cigar-smoke into the air, and going over in thought the letter he had just despatched. Now that it was gone, he felt quieter and more satisfied than he had done for some time past.

It was a magnificent autumn day, coming in a long train of magnificent days; for this is the pleasantest time of the year in Poland,—unbroken mellow sunshine and clear sky, stretching often till into November; and then with a sudden break the winter comes.

The winter was some weeks off yet, although everything spoke of the summer's decay. The swallows' nests were deserted, and outside the town the hedgerows and the grass were covered with large flakes of gossamer webs, which go by the name of *Alt Weiber Sommer*. Some stray shreds had floated into the town, and hung about in the air cloudily, looking hardly more real than the puffs of Otto's tobacco-smoke.

Schweiner's energetic search brought several books down to the floor with a bang. Otto heard it, but scarcely turned round, only giving vent to some half-spoken comment, not complimentary to his comrade. *Schweiner* muttered something too, savouring more strongly of an oath than Otto's remark, and began picking up the books.

Amongst them was Otto's sketch-book, which had fallen on its face open; and as *Schweiner* gathered it up with the rest, he caught sight of one of Otto's sketches—a view of Hamburg—and became interested, or perhaps only curious.

"Ah, rather good,—not so bad," he commented half aloud, in turning over the pages. Presently he came upon the sketches Otto had made on board ship.

"Nasty-looking fellow that! Not half such a bad girl," the next page showing the *retroussé* nose and abundant curls of one of Otto's fair acquaintances of the ship.

Otto at the window heard him talking to himself, but paid no heed. He was lazily watching the floating webs, and wondering how long the summer would last.

"Ah, *Sapperlot, noch einmal!*" burst suddenly from Schweiner, in a loud tone.

Otto turned round with a slight movement of impatience, and saw the other staring through his single eyeglass at something in the sketch-book, with an expression of the utmost astonishment and admiration.

"What has come to the man next?" he soliloquised, lounging up to him and glancing over his shoulder.

His expression changed on the instant, and that passing glance was riveted into a steadfast gaze.

Reata's face was before him on the page, Reata's eyes were looking at him from off the dead paper; and with a sudden start that was almost pain, the recognition of her beauty overwhelmed him like a surprise. It was four months since he had seen her, and her lovely face had begun to grow just a little dim in his memory, as the faces of the absent always do, however truly we may love them.

Now the spell was on him again for the moment; it seized on him with the strength of a reality, and he felt his breath coming quicker.

"Ah, *Sapperlot, noch einmal!*" repeated Schweiner, after a second's awestruck silence.

"Give it me," said Otto, dreamily,

putting out his hand towards it; not with any hasty impatience in his tone, or any effort to hide his feelings. Schweiner was nothing to him at that moment—the mere subordinate creature who happened to be holding the book; everything else was nothing to him then. He was far away in mind in the Mexican forest, with the palm-trees and the rustling grasses; he could breathe the very perfumes that hung so heavily about the flowers, could hear the buzz of insect-life, and see the humming-birds as they darted in and out between the shadowy branches. "Give it me," he repeated.

Schweiner gave it him, and then stood staring from the sketch to Otto. There were signs in Otto's face he could not read: there was a violent emotion; there was surprise, tenderness, and also a sharp pain. His hands trembled a little as he held the book, and he stood gazing on the page still dreamily.

"Stunningly handsome girl that! Who is she?" inquired Schweiner presently, seeing that the other was lost in a trance; and then, with another start, Otto came back to his real surroundings, and turned round angrily, while quickly closing the book to hide that face from sight. "What are you staying here for? Haven't you found that book yet?"

"Is she any one you knew in Mexico?" Schweiner asked, disregarding Otto's remark.

"In Mexico! Nonsense! not a bit of it!" said Otto, growing red with vexation. "It is an old thing I did years ago, somewhere in Germany; don't even remember where." And he walked to the window again, and leant out as he had done before; but where was gone the quiet of half an hour ago! The air seemed full of hovering, mocking

little phantoms; he could see no stillness in the autumn day. Would his letter have been different had he looked into the sketch-book before writing it?

"I was *not* aware that cactuses and palm-trees grew in Germany," remarked the sagacious Schweiner to himself, as he sauntered back home.

CHAPTER XIX.—THE VOLUNTEER FIRE-BRIGADE.

"Leave untended the herd,
The flock without shelter;
Leave the corpse uninterred,
The bride at the altar.
Leave the deer, leave the steer,
Leave nets and barges;
Come with your fighting gear,
Broadwords and targes."

—SIR W. SCOTT.

After the description that has been given of Rzeszów, it will perhaps be surprising to hear that it boasted of a Fire-Brigade, not large in number, and only of very recent existence, but owning gorgeous uniforms, high boots, and glittering helmets, which the wearers fondly believed far to outshine those of all dragoon regiments. They recruited their ranks from the most respectable tradesmen of the place, — that is, of course, Christian tradesmen, for Jews, do not come under that head — at least, not in Galicia. There were the bookbinder, the apothecary, the sacristan, the carpenter, shining foremost in the ranks, and leading on the lower portion, consisting of six or seven apprentices and two or three waiters, to honour and glory. According to this system, whenever a chimney was on fire, every tradesman in the place would drop his occupation like a hot potato and precipitate himself on to the scene of action — having, of course, first put on his gorgeous uniform and donned his shining helmet. Thus the bookbinder would fling away his half-bound book, the apothecary would leave standing his half-mixed pills, the barber abandon his half-shaved

victim, the sacristan put down the censer of smoking incense and desert the Curé, leaving him to bury the dead or baptise the living as best he could without help.

Whether this arrangement would answer in the long-run, was a question which as yet remained unanswered. The promising institution had only sprung into life a month ago, and its valuable qualities had not as yet been called to the test. In the meantime everybody was very sanguine and very pleased with their helmets. They had also constructed a sort of skeleton edifice of wood, for practising scaling walls and the saving of lives; and every Sunday afternoon they marched about the town in order, and, of course, in full uniform, with the apothecary at the head, and the two youngest waiters beating drums. The precise object of these parades, which extended indiscriminately over all parts of the town, was not evident; and the drums were irritating to the uninterested: but at least it was a sight to look at, and it was something out of the common to see one's tradesmen, who on week-days stood behind counters in shabby attire, decked out so brilliantly, and half throttled in the splendid coils of

incombustible rope winding round their bodies. For a small man it was rather difficult to carry off these incombustible coils with dignity. For instance, the bookbinder, who was pale and insignificant, gave you the impression of being an ornamental object on which it had been found convenient to wind the rope.

The Fire-Brigade also owned two water-pumps, brilliantly painted and quite as ornamental as themselves. It was supposed that these were to do wonders in quelling future fires; but as yet the shoemaker, under whose charge they were placed, had not quite succeeded in mastering their system, and felt a little nervous as to results.

Of course all this magnificence must be paid for; and by the time that all the twenty-five members of the Brigade were arrayed, and the skeleton edifice was completed, and the buckets were paid for, their funds had run very low, and how to replenish them became an object of serious consideration. Opinions differed a good deal on this point, and the meetings held in the bookbinder's back-shop were apt to be stormy at this time. Some of the lower members, amongst whom were the saddler and the barber, voted for simply sending round a large sheet of paper, and requesting each person to put down any sum they were inclined to give towards the sustenance of this valuable institution; and the waiters and apprentices declared themselves ready to go round with the paper, in bands of two and two; and they did not think that any one would be able to refuse a petition when presented by themselves in full uniform. But the apothecary and the bookbinder would not hear of anything so utterly devoid of dig-

nity; they had much loftier ideas on the subject, and in this opinion they were warmly seconded by the sacristan. When asked what proposal they had to put forward, the apothecary took the word, and explained that the thing ought to be done in much better style; according to his notions, when you asked people to give money, you must also give them something for it. Here being pressed by the shoemaker, in rather energetic language, to come to the point without more ado, he did so, and proposed that the necessary funds should be raised by a public entertainment. It was too late in the season for anything to be given in the open air; for a concert they did not possess sufficient musical powers: therefore, although the Carnival was still some way off, and this was not the proper time for dancing, their best course and most profitable one would still be to give a ball. Whereupon the Fire-Brigade unanimously presented a vote of thanks to their leader for his intelligent and able advice, and the proposition was acceded to with general acclamation. Only the sacristan expressed some doubt as to how far, in his position, his personal co-operation in the matter would be considered correct; he did not object to balls in the abstract, but it was possible that his presence at one might be thought undesirable by the Curé.

The undertaking was by no means as formidable as it may sound to the uninitiated. It consisted simply in hiring the room, paying for the lights and the music, and for getting the floor swept and waxed, and then issuing cards of invitation at one florin and a half or two florins a-head. Providing the supper never entered into the programme; those who

could and would pay for it ordered what they wanted, and the others did without.

During the whole of the week before the ball, a gentle excitement pervaded the town, and animated all the twenty-five members of the Volunteer Fire Brigade. You could not enter the shop of a Christian tradesman without being at once assailed by the question, "Are you coming to our ball?" and being pestered to take twice as many tickets as you wanted.

The weather broke two days before the great day, and the roads got bad. People were therefore a good deal surprised when on the forenoon of the ball-day Count Przeszechowski's carriage was seen on the *Place*, drawn up before the inn. No other carriages had come in from the country.

At the officers' table that day at dinner the conversation was of nothing but the ball prospects.

"Of course, Bodenbach, we are *vis-à-vis* for the quadrilles to-night?" called out Lieutenant Langenfeld across to his friend.

"Who? I?" said Otto, looking up. "I am not going to be there."

"Not going to be there?" from everybody, in different tones of voice. "Why, Bodenbach, what do you mean?"

"I mean that I am not going to be at the ball."

Here Lieutenant Farkas, a young man who had an unfortunate talent for saying wrong things at wrong moments, spoke—

"But Comtesse Halka Przeszechowska is going to be there. I heard it for certain this morning."

Otto shrugged his shoulders, and muttered that that could in no way affect his plans. But his indifference was too obviously put on, and took nobody in. The announcement was very surprising, for Otto

had let fall nothing of his resolve before. He had made no remark when he had first heard of the ball, neither when it was mentioned before him that Comtesse Halka was probably going to be there, but everybody had taken his presence for granted.

Langenfeld would have liked to press the question further, but Otto was in one of his impenetrable moods; so he forbore wisely, and looked about for another *vis-à-vis*.

At eight o'clock the ball was beginning, the strains of the music could be heard faintly down in the street; and Otto, as he walked along to supper, with his cigar lit, heard them too. He glanced up at the lighted windows where he had amused himself very fairly last winter, and wondered lazily whether the ball was going to be full. He did not feel any interest in the question, nor the slightest regret for his resolution. If he could have shirked the dancing, he might have been persuaded to go and look on; but this would have been making himself still more conspicuous than by his absence. How could he, an engaged man, dance with any one but his own beautiful bride? The very thought was unendurable to him. Besides, Comtesse Halka was to be there; he had not met her since his return from Mexico, and there might be a little awkwardness to get over, which it would be pleasanter to avoid.

He turned in at the hotel entrance, and betook himself to his solitary supper in the eating-room, straight below where the ball was going on. But woe to the unfortunate man who expects to be attended to under these circumstances! Every one in the inn was off their balance or out of their senses; the dingy eating-room was deserted;

all the waiters were figuring to-night in their nobler character of Fire-Brigadesmen. After a quarter of an hour of fruitless attempt, Otto captured somebody, who after another quarter of an hour brought him some food; and then he sat down half famished, by the light of one wretched little oil-lamp, to his solitary supper, without even a newspaper to beguile the absolute solitude, for all the newspapers had been cleared away, no one knew where, in the general confusion. People had almost ceased arriving by this time. He had heard them passing in by the open entrance, sometimes girls' voices laughing and talking to each other, sometimes the tread of heavy feet or the clanking of swords. Up-stairs, dancing was in full swing; and the ceiling trembled under the waltzers' feet; the vibration touched even Otto's poor little lamp, making the smoky glass-chimney rattle monotonously. It was past nine o'clock when Otto, in the dingy dining-room down-stairs, rose from his cheerless repast; and just as he was stretching and yawning, and thinking to himself that he supposed he had better be getting home and to bed, up-stairs the last arrival was entering the ball-room—the most important arrival, which everybody had been looking out for anxiously for the last half-hour, Comtesse Halka Przeszechowska and her mother.

Comtesse Halka had long ago outlived the period when to enter a ball-room is a matter of trepidation; she had perfectly acquired that languid, high-bred air which is so becoming when gracefully worn. But to-day there was a change, a very slight change, in her demeanour; there was a delicate flush on her cheek, there was something in her grey eyes that was not quite their usual calmness

—something that had not been in them even, on that memorable evening seven years ago, after she had returned Count A—— his ring. It might be anxiety, it might be pleasure; what people saw was only that Comtesse Halka was in wonderful looks, and a shade more animated—or, as some said, more alive—than usual. She was dressed with her usual unimpeachable taste, her long-trained silk dress—which had already done service in the capital last season, but which was considered good enough for Rzeszów — of some indescribable shade, which was neither exactly yellow nor exactly fawn-colour, but something between the two, and almost matching her hair in colour, quite devoid of the fluttering ribbons and garlands of flowers which were conspicuous on most of the other toilets. Of jewels she wore a heavy necklace of old and curiously-worked gold ornaments, long ear-rings of the same, a couple of tea-roses in her hair, and another on the front of her dress. As she took her place in the quadrille, all eyes were upon her still: she was the centre of observation and interest; her presence was a compliment to the ball; the whole Fire-Brigade was flattered as a body, and each of the twenty-five members of the Fire-Brigade was flattered individually and personally. The little bookbinder, who, with the hairdresser's daughter on his arm, was standing not far off, and who, relieved of his incombustible coils, was breathing more freely to-night, could not take his eyes off her; the sacristan, who had so far overcome his religious scruples as to find his presence at the ball possible, but whose dignity would not permit him to take an active part in the amusements, stood in

the doorway looking on, and swelling in silent triumph. The Comtesse belonged to a different sphere from the Rzeszółów world, and she had been gracious enough to take part in their modest entertainment—she, who was accustomed to pass every season in the capital, and who could surely not be supposed to care much for the mere amusement of dancing. Of all the ladies present she knew only the Colonel's and the Starosta's* families; she was the only representative of the country gentry,—everybody else was outside her circle; and her manner as regarded them was a sort of passive ignoring, which yet was not arrogance, because she seemed simply to overlook their presence. There were prettier faces than hers in the room, and younger ones, and there were also fresher dresses; but Halka, although she did not perhaps outshine them all, still put them all to a disadvantage. You might have been well pleased with the company before, but now unaccountably they fall in your eyes. To look at her sauntering through the figures of the quadrille in her old yellow silk, made one think that to be young and fresh was to be vulgar, that to be airily dressed was to be tawdry, that nothing was worth looking at but that aristocratic paleness, and no vivacity so fascinating as those graceful impassive motions.

Before Comtesse Halka had got through half of the first figure, she had, while appearing only to be conversing with her partner, ascertained that Otto Bodenbach was not in the room, and realised her own position perfectly, in all its details and bearings.

"You will have been surprised

to find such a well-filled room to-night, Comtesse," her partner, a young dragoon officer, one of the scholars of the Equitation, was saying. "It is quite wonderful for Rzeszółów—thirty-two dancing couples!"

"Yes, and the room looks unusually brilliant with all these uniforms."

"Oh, uncommonly brilliant, but puts us dragoons rather to a disadvantage. I am in constant terror this evening of being taken for a Fire-Brigadesman."

"Well, and what particular harm would that do you?"

"Oh, nothing very dreadful; only it is not the Fire-Brigadesman alone—I must necessarily also be a carpenter, or a shoemaker, or some other trade."

"But it must be some consolation to you to think that you are not alone exposed to that danger; you have plenty brother officers to keep you in countenance."

"Yes, we are all here to-night, every single officer in the place, I think; but stop, let me see, I remember hearing that somebody wasn't coming—Bodenbach, or Bodenbergh, or some name of that sort, the one who has the handsome horse; don't you know, Comtesse? I have only been a week here, and I hardly know all their names yet."

"I don't know the horse, but I know Baron Bodenbach," returned Comtesse Halka, so quietly that her partner never suspected upon what dangerous ground he had touched. "He is a good dancer; but there are plenty dancers to-night, so I don't suppose he will be much missed."

About the same time Otto, downstairs, had come out of the eating-room, and was standing in the dark-

* Starosta is in Poland a high official position.

ness of the covered entrance lighting his cigar, previous to getting into the street. He knew they were at the quadrille by the music, an arrangement of airs from "*Flotte Bursche*," which he was very familiar with from last winter. The small Jewish orchestra had little variety in its *répertoire*. "I used to think it very jolly last winter," he soliloquised, while shutting up his pocket-matchbox.

There were steps coming down the staircase, and voices talking; two of the non-dancers, infantry officers, come down to get a breath of fresh air during the quadrille, and escape from the overheated ball-room—both fanning themselves vigorously with their handkerchiefs.

"Very foolish of him," one was saying, "to show his pique so plainly."

"Not at all, not at all," replied the other; "it is the only wise

thing I have ever seen him do. Do you think it can be pleasant to show yourself alongside of the rival who has supplanted you?"

"People thought the affair likely enough last winter; though I, for one, was always ready to bet upon the other—— Ha, Bodonbach! is that you?" and the start which the speaker gave convinced Otto, if he had wanted a proof, that he had been the subject of conversation. "It is so confoundedly dark in this hole! You are not showing at the ball to-night—sorry to hear you are unwell."

"I am *not* unwell, and I *am* going to be at the ball; just on my way home to change dress,"—and Otto, in a high state of temper, brushed passed them into the street, leaving the two staring at each other in some discomfiture, and digesting the truth of the proverb, "*Quand on parle du diable on en voit la queue!*"

STOCK-JOBGING AND THE STOCK EXCHANGE.

It was about the year 1688, says Lord Macaulay, that the word stock-jobber was first heard in the city of London. From that time down to the present day, stock-jobbing and the Stock Exchange have never ceased to be the object of passionate devotion, of suspicious distrust, or of virulent hatred, to thousands of persons. It has been alternately looked on as the good genius whose touch brings wealth and prosperity to men, and as the horse-leech which has sucked the life-blood of its victims. It has been described in turns as the Pactolus rolling down its golden sands, or as the cloaca bearing with it all the refuse of mankind.

If one might be permitted for once to disregard Shakespeare, and to speculate upon the influence of a name, it would be curious to determine how much of the odium attached to the Stock Exchange has gathered round the word jobber. Jobbers and jobbery go naturally together. Politics and the stock-market have always reacted on each other; and the Minister who raised political jobbery almost to the level of an exact science, was more than suspected of the closest intimacy with the jobbers of Change Alley. Be this as it may, we note, as one indication of feeling, that in the Report of the Commission* which sat last year, the obnoxious word finds no place, and that jobbers are henceforth to be known only as dealers. Nor is a reason for the difference of opinion with regard to stock-jobbing far to seek. It has varied with the success or ill-fortune of the speculations of the

day. Each period in our history of quiet peace and steady progress has been succeeded by a wild burst of speculation, in which the slow accumulations of years have seemed to double themselves at one bound, and an endless vista of high interest and large profits has appeared to open out before us. Then has been the time when the doors of our Temple of Janus have been thronged by willing worshippers. The Stock Exchange has been the centre of the busy throng. Its mechanism has helped many to a short-lived fortune. Its praises have been in the mouths of men, and its members have not been slow to take toll of the follies of mankind. Then has come the reaction. The bubble has burst. The accumulated savings of years have disappeared. Bonds which seemed destined to a never-ending rise are worth no more than the paper on which they are printed. The once-prized share in the inexhaustible resources of the well-puffed mine is remembered only by the calls of the official liquidator.

Then comes the time of disappointment and of clamour. The speculators who have risked all on the dangerous hazard and have lost, denounce at once the system and the men. The widow and orphan who have been robbed of their pittance, the clergyman who has been deluded in his innocence, the half-pay officer who has pledged his pension for worthless promises, reappear in successive generations with startling uniformity. Then come denunciations of the infamous practice of stock-jobbing. Committees of Inquiry are moved for in Par-

* London Stock Exchange Commission : Report and Minutes of Evidence. Presented to both Houses of Parliament, by command of her Majesty. 1878.

liament, condemnatory resolutions are passed, and since the milder manners of our time no longer permit us to call out for confiscation and for blood, we are forced to be content to leave the offenders to social ostracism and the Court of Bankruptcy. The Commission which reported at the end of last session is the most recent instance of this feeling of soreness and disappointment. A period of commercial inflation and large profits had produced its natural result. Surplus capital was asking for investment, and the crowd of clever sharks whose business it is to prey upon their fellow-men were not long in meeting the demand. Limited liability companies of the earlier type were somewhat at a discount. Speculators as a rule have not long memories, but the crash of 1866 and the recollection of the Black Friday when Overend & Gurneys fell, was still fresh in the minds of many. The ingenious promoter, therefore, turned his attention in a comparatively new direction, and the Loan to a Foreign Government for industrial purposes seemed to combine all the requisite elements of attraction. The nominal interest was good, the yield on the price of issue was still better. The payments were in small instalments, and spread in some cases over a long period. In the meantime there were the endless chances of manipulating the stock, and getting out at a high price before any serious risk had been incurred. The money too, in most cases, was to remain, not a mere dead burden on the borrowing nation, but a productive source of future prosperity, in the shape of railroads, harbours, and other works of permanent utility. Forests of logwood and islands of guano were hypothecated for payment of the interest, whilst occasional drawings at par gave to the holders some of the excitement of a

lottery. There is no need to tell the result. It is written in the evidence and Report of the Committee of 1875, and that Committee was not unnaturally followed up by the Royal Commission which issued its Report at the end of last session.

It is not our intention to review at length the recommendations of the Commission, or the evidence on which they are based. They were sufficiently criticised at the time in the daily and weekly papers. The chief value of the inquiry, in our estimation, is that it puts into the clear language of ordinary life, free from technicalities, that which has hitherto been a subject of mystery to all save the initiated few. That it has disappointed the hopes of many is but natural. The Commissioners have wisely, as we judge, excluded as far as possible those personal reflections and individual investigations which gave such zest to the inquiry of the Foreign Loans Committee. They have taken in hand the system, and not its excrescences. The Stock Exchange has hitherto been a sealed book. It will be so no longer; and to a clear understanding of the method of business, rather than to any system of Government control, the public must be taught to look for protection in their dealings.

Instead of reviewing the system as it is set forth in the pages of the Blue-book, we have thought that it might be more interesting to our readers if we were to throw together, in as connected a form as we could, such fragments as have come down to us of its history, and then perhaps look at the recommendations of the Commission as to the future in the light of the experience of the past. It is a curious point with regard to the Stock Exchange, and illustrative of the whole traditional character of the place, that no for-

mal history of its transactions has ever been written. Francis's book is a collection of anecdotes and incidents; it is not a history of the place or of its business. Intimately connected as it has been with the monetary and financial history of this country, it has grown up silently and quietly, avoiding rather than courting publicity, and passing at length imperceptibly, and, as it were, against its will, from the position of a private club into the position of a public institution.

To the action of the Legislature indirectly is due the existence of the Stock Exchange itself, but the trade of stock-jobbing grew and flourished before the Stock Exchange existed. To those who denounce the Stock Exchange, with its closed doors and its freemasonry of membership, as the cause of all the evils of speculation, it may be pointed out that the wildest excesses of speculation in England were before the Stock Exchange was formed; and that were the Stock Exchange to be swept away by imperial edict to-morrow, the same spirit would still find vent for itself elsewhere.

Stock-jobbers and stock-jobbing, as we have said, took their rise in the end of the seventeenth century; and, like Pallas, they seem to have sprung forth full-grown from the brain of their progenitors. The last few years of that century were indeed years to be much remembered in the financial history of this country. In 1692 the loan of a million pounds laid the first foundation of the National Debt. In 1694 the first charter was granted to the Bank of England. The currency of the country was reformed in 1694, and to meet the deficiency of coin the first Exchequer Bill was issued in 1696. The charter of the old East India Company was renewed in 1693; the

charter to the New East India Company was granted in 1698. The abortive scheme of the Land Bank was started in 1697; the ill-starred Darien Expedition was planned in 1698.

Together with these greater ventures came the shoal of smaller fry which never fail to follow in the wake of any great speculative movement. In 1692, England, says Macaulay, witnessed for the first time those phenomena with which a long experience has made us familiar. Then comes a list of the companies brought out, described with all the picturesqueness of detail in which Macaulay so excels. The list is a strange one—not so strange, perhaps, as the list of 1720, scarcely stranger than some of the schemes which in the last ten years have sought admission to the London Stock Exchange. In 1692 there was a Copper Company which proposed to explore the mines of England, and held out a hope that they would prove not less valuable than those of Potosi. In 1693 there was "the Gold Company, Limited," for working an extinct gold-mine in Wales, which actually lingered on in existence till 1878, though it never obtained either a settlement or quotation from the Committee of the Stock Exchange.

In the means used for floating these new schemes, the promoters of the seventeenth century seem to have been but a little way behind their successors in the nineteenth. In Shadwell's play of the 'Volunteers; or, the Stock-jobbers,' brought out in 1692, all doubts as to whether it be godly or not to hold shares in a company for bringing over Chinese rope-dancers are set at rest by the reflection that the shares will sell well, and then the holders need not care whether the dancers come over or no. In much

the same way the promoters of such a company as the Peruvian Railways may have congratulated themselves that if once a market were made in the shares, and a sufficient premium realised, it mattered little to them whether railways were made in Peru or not.

Nor was the better side of the picture lost sight of by contemporary writers. Joseph Houghton, a Fellow of the Royal Society, to whose periodical publication, called 'A Collection for the Improvement of Husbandry and Trade,' Macaulay is indebted for his details as to the companies of the time, has, in a few pithy sentences in one of his numbers, anticipated most of the results of Committees and Commissions. In his number of the 8th June 1694 he tells us that he has thought fit to treat of joint-stocks and the various dealings therein, commonly called stock-jobbing. After quoting Descartes to the effect that men should purge their minds of prejudice and come unbiassed to the examination of what lay before them, he continues:—

"If my reader come prepossessed against trading in stocks, it will be to little purpose for me to go about to assure him of the lawfulness or usefulness of them. Some abuses may probably have been committed by traders therein; but must we presently thereupon run down all with a full cry that so deal therein? May we not as well prohibit the use of wine because we see men wallowing in the kennels by drinking too much of it? I am the larger in this because I know many worthy persons of great honour and probity who deal in stocks that do abominate the least unjust action; and it is a great hardship upon such gentlemen to undergo the censures of mankind who inveigh against all trade and traders in stock, though at the same time they know little or nothing about it."

He himself was certainly not in this last category. In his numbers

of June 22 and July 6, 1694, he gives a clear and succinct account of options, or, as he calls them, "Refuses" and "Putts." On July 13th is the first mention of "time bargains;" whilst the operations of those mysterious "syndicates," which are thought by some to be the peculiar development of the nineteenth century, and the reason which induces so many companies to divide their stocks into A and B, preferred and deferred, and suchlike subdivisions, are summed up in the remark that, "in small stocks 'tis possible to have shares rise or fall by the contrivances of a few men in confederacy, but in great stocks 'tis more difficult." The question of brokers' commissions is discussed, and, like the Royal Commissioners, he decides in favour of freedom of contract. "The price of brokerage for some shares is 10s. a share; for other shares commonly 5s., except by reason of variety of circumstances they make other different agreements." Finally, on the 2d of May 1696, after a general panegyric on the companies of the time, he makes special mention of the improvement in window-glass as due to the Glass Company, and winds up by saying, "Whatever may be said against stock-jobbing, it has been the means to raise great sums of money to improve this art, and seldom is there much money laid out in the kingdom to encourage any trade but the publick is the better, whatever the gain or loss of the proprietors may prove—*cateat emptor*." Whoever carefully considers these remarks will find in them the germs of the policy embodied in the Limited Liability Acts.

We make no apologies for quoting at length from this curious publication. It illustrates as nothing else can, how, in this country, the method of funding and the trade of stock-jobbing began.

The end of the seventeenth century was the first instance of that general law, with which we have since become familiar, that accumulated savings require new openings for investment. It was inevitable that new companies should be formed, and it was inevitable that the shares of such companies, easily transferable and of fluctuating value, should be the subject of speculation. With or without the establishment of a National Debt, there would have been jobbing at that time; but the creation of a permanent debt probably led to the perpetuation of a class of jobbers, who might otherwise only have appeared and reappeared again at intervals in our history.

Nor were the politicians of the time slow to seize upon the symptoms as if they were the causes of the disease. In 1697. was passed the first of those many laws—often proposed, sometimes carried, but always evaded—to restrain the number and ill practices of brokers and stock-jobbers.

By this Act the number of brokers was not to exceed one hundred: their admission was to be regulated by the Court of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen; their brokerage was to be limited to 10s. per cent; and they were forbidden to deal in any way for themselves, or to make any gain over and above their brokerage. Time-bargains in joint-stock and Exchequer tallies were to be limited to three days, and all contracts for a longer period to be absolutely void at law. A similar provision with regard to Bank of England stock had been inserted in an earlier Act of the same year. To prevent fictitious bargains, it had been declared that no contract for the sale of bank stock should be valid unless registered within seven days in the bank books, and actually transferred within fourteen. The same prin-

ciple was now to be applied to the stocks of the great trading companies, and to the Government tallies, which, as it was said, were to be rescued from the stock-jobbing harpies of the day.

Of the effect of this Act we have no direct evidence. India stock and tallies continued to fluctuate; great fortunes were still made by skilful combinations; and the names of Sir Henry Furnese, one of the first directors of the Bank of England—of the Jew Medina, who accompanied Marlborough on his campaigns—and of Thomas Guy, the founder of Guy's Hospital—have come down to us as the most fortunate speculators of that time. The Act itself expired in 1707. It was not renewed, and in the provisions of the Act of Anne passed in that year for the regulation of brokers, there is no allusion to time-bargains and no special reference to stock-brokers. The Act itself is principally remarkable as the only attempt in the history of our country to make the trade of dealing in stocks a monopoly, and to limit the number of persons concerned in it. The Stock Exchange, as it at present exists, is in a certain sense a monopoly, but it is a monopoly in the sense in which a great joint-stock company monopolises to itself the trade of individual merchants, or a co-operative store absorbs within itself the retail business of a neighbourhood. It has won its way to being the sole market in London by open competition with all comers, and not by any favour of the law.

In France it has been otherwise. More than a century before the English law was passed, the number of brokers of all kinds in France was limited, and their functions regulated by an Order in Council of 1595. Sully first made them a source of revenue to the

Government; and from that time to the present, their number, their title, and their exclusive privileges have been subject to the caprice or the cupidity of successive Governments. In the time of Law the number of recognised brokers was sixty, with the title granted them in 1620 of "*Agents héréditaires de change et de banque de notre bonne ville de Paris.*" At the present day, after being subject to fluctuations almost as various as the stocks in which they have dealt, the number of recognised "*agents de change*" in the Paris Bourse is still sixty. They are no longer "*héréditaires,*" but their offices are transmissible under the sanction of Government; and the "*prime*" or consideration payable on transfer, which in 1816 was no more than 30,000 francs, has risen of late years to more than 2,000,000. This is not the place to discuss the effect of such a restriction on the Paris Bourse, or the developments to which it has led. A good deal of information with respect to these points will be found in the evidence given before the Royal Commission and in the papers in the Appendix. It is typical of the history of this country that here alone the dealings in stocks and shares have substantially been free from Government control, and that London is now the centre of the monetary transactions of the world.

In one respect the spirit of exclusiveness prevailed to a comparatively recent time. The whole number of brokers' licences granted by the Corporation of the City of London was unlimited by law, but by custom the number of Jew brokers was limited to twelve, and on the death of a Jew broker, the Lord Mayor of the day had the lucrative privilege of selling the appointment to the highest bidder. The business of a broker is now freed from all restric-

tions. They no longer have to be duly recommended by six persons of approved credit; they no longer enter into a bond to the city; they are no longer, except in name, "*sworn brokers.*" Any person, by the payment of the admission-fee and annual tax of £5, is entitled to call himself a broker of the City of London. The Stock Exchange have, of course, their own rules and regulations independent of the City; but they, too, have shown a tendency to place as few restrictions as possible upon the admission of their members. "*The Stock Exchange,*" says the Report, "*has in past times been accused of being a monopoly, and it has sought to justify itself by throwing open its doors as widely as possible to persons asking for admission.*" We most cordially agree with the recommendations of the Commissioners that there should in future be a stricter inquiry into the class of persons admitted.

Nothing, in fact, has done so much to damage the reputation of the Stock Exchange as the idea that it is a refuge for the destitute, in which a person without character and without capital, who has failed in every other walk of life, may earn a precarious livelihood by preying upon his fellow-creatures. This, we say, is the popular idea of the Stock Exchange. Like most popular ideas, it is probably erroneous; but nothing would do so much to raise the status of the institution and of its members as the organisation of stock-broking as a regular profession.

There is a distinction, no doubt, in this respect, between brokers and dealers. In the broker the first requisite is character, in the dealer it is capital. By standing in the market to make a price at his own risk the dealer enters into no special relation with the general public, and undertakes no fiduciary

duties with regard to them. His character and his credit chiefly concern those who deal with him as principals within the house, and to the house itself may well be left the protection of its members.

With the broker it is otherwise. The relation of principal and agent in every market, and more particularly in the Stock Exchange, is one of confidence. Cases of fraud and collusion are unfortunately not unknown, and the surroundings of a closed market give peculiar facilities at any rate for suspicion. The Committee have, in certain recent cases, shown a laudable activity, but their powers are ill defined; and judges elected by universal suffrage are not always the most extreme to mark what is amiss among their constituents. It may be a question whether the public have not a right to some tribunal analogous to that provided for solicitor and client to which they might appeal for prompt redress. Whether or not it would be advisable for the Stock Exchange themselves to apply for such powers as are granted to the Incorporated Law Society is a question for them; but the question for the public is whether the profession of a broker should not in some ways be made to correspond with that of a solicitor, and whether it should not be possible to strike a man off the list of brokers for some reason short of formal conviction for fraud or felony.

We are anticipating, however; for at the time of which we have been speaking, the Stock Exchange had neither a local habitation nor a name. Dealings in stocks and shares were free to all, and the modern distinction of jobber and broker can scarcely be said to have existed. The earliest place in which such dealings were carried on was the Royal Exchange, the building which had been reared

after the fire of 1666, on the site of the older Exchange of Gresham, destined in its turn to fall a prey to the flames in 1838. Here the first stock-jobbing transactions of our country were carried on, and here, down to the year 1822, the dealings in foreign funds, such as they were, still remained. It was not long, however, before the crowd of persons attracted by the speculations of the day became a serious inconvenience to the legitimate business of the place. The jobbers accordingly migrated, and took up their quarters in the place which has been identified with their trade by the plays and the pamphlets of the eighteenth century. The place is thus described in a pamphlet of 1719:—

“The centre of jobbing is in the kingdom of Change Alley and its adjacencies. The limits are easily surrounded in about a minute and a half. Stepping out of Jonathan’s into the Alley, you turn your face full south; moving on a few paces, and then turning due east, you advance to Garraway’s; from thence going out at the other door, you go on still east into Birchin Lane; and then halting a little at the Sword Blade Bank, to do much mischief in fewest words, you immediately face to the north, enter Cornhill, visit two or three petty provinces there in your way west, and thus having boxed your compass and sailed round the whole stock-jobbing globe, you turn into Jonathan’s again; and so, as most of the great follies of life oblige us to do, you end just where you began.”

Such was the home of stock-jobbing in the first half of the eighteenth century. Let us now look for a moment at the business which was carried on there. In Mrs Centlivre’s Comedy, “A Bold Stroke for a Wife,” published in 1717, will be found a description of Jonathan’s, the headquarters of speculation, as it then existed. There is the hero

of the piece, Colonel Fainwell; there is Mr Tradelove, the change-broker; and there are all the accessories of false rumours and feigned panics which the suspicion of to-day associates with the closed doors of Capel Court. "Are you a bull or a bear to-day, Abraham?" says one. "A bull, faith!" replies the other; "but I have a good putt for next week." There is no necessity here to employ a broker. A man may not merely enjoy the luxury of seeing his business transacted, but he may even transact it for himself. If he do, no doubt he will bring down on him the wrath of the more regular attendants—but of that he must judge for himself. "I would fain bite that spark in the brown coat," says one; "he comes very often into the Alley, but never employs a broker." To the same purpose, to teach men and even women to do their business for themselves without the assistance of a broker, is the end and object of a little book by one Mortimer, styling himself Philanthropos, called 'Every Man his own Broker.' This little book, written by one who, to use his own words, had lost a genteel fortune by being the innocent dupe of the gentlemen of Change Alley, was first published in 1761. It rapidly ran through at least ten editions, and gives the most systematic and connected account of stock-jobbing in the eighteenth century. It describes the *habitués* of the place, regulating their purses by gazettes and private letters, as some do their diet and dress by barometers. It contains the first full descriptions of the bull and the bear—descriptions too often quoted at length to need repetition here. The bull, sulky and heavy, sitting in some corner in a gloomy, melancholy posture; the bear, with meagre, haggard looks, and a voracious fierceness

in his countenance, frightening all around him out of that property he wants to buy. In spite, however, of the advice and the assistance of Mortimer, the struggle for independence waxed weaker; or may we not, perhaps, say the principle of the division of labour became more developed? Before the close of the last century the broker had become in fact, that which he is now recognised to be in theory—the necessary medium of communication in all dealings in stocks and shares.

We have said that, to the action of the Legislature itself is indirectly due the existence of the Stock Exchange, and it is time that we should make good our assertion.

The year 1717 is, for many reasons, remarkable in the annals of English finance. It was in that year that the business of the National Debt was first undertaken by the Bank of England. In the following year the subscription for a Government loan was for the first time taken at the Bank. In 1717, in consequence of the disturbance in the relative value of metals, the guinea was reduced in value from 21s. 6d. to 21s., and from that time gold became practically what it has since become legally—the single monetary standard in England. In 1717 the rate of interest on the debts due from Government to the Bank and the South Sea Company was reduced from 6 to 5 per cent; and in that year the first Act was passed for incorporating certain short annuities into the stock of the South Sea Company. It was, in fact, a time of comparative prosperity, such as we have spoken of before, when the capital seeking investment was in excess of the legitimate openings. The cessation of the war with France, the unopposed accession of the house of Hanover, the collapse of the

Jacobite rebellion, all tended in the same direction. The result was that the lessons of 1694 were forgotten, and England plunged wildly into a career of speculation which will be a byword so long as English history is written.

It is not necessary to tell at length how Law, the pupil of Paterson, the deviser of the Bank of England and the author of the Darien Expedition, started his scheme for the revival of the French Funds; how for a time the frenzy of the Mississippi Scheme carried captive all classes of society; and how the spirit of speculation passed over from France to England, and the scenes of the Rue Quinquempoix were reproduced in the coffee-houses of Change Alley.

At the end of 1719 the South Sea stock had stood at 126. In June 1720 the third subscription of five millions was offered, at the price of £1000 per cent, payable in ten instalments, and £400 were in a few days paid for the first instalment.

By the end of 1720 the collapse had come, and the cry for vengeance had arisen. Parliament met on the 8th of December, and scarcely had it met when it passed a resolution that nothing can tend more to the establishment of public credit than preventing the infamous practice of stock-jobbing. The resolution slumbered for a while, but the spirit of hostility to stock-jobbing and stock-jobbers embodied in it found its exponent in Sir John Barnard, one of the members for the City of London.

Of high and unblemished reputation, and of commanding influence in commercial circles, Sir John Barnard was one of those who believe implicitly in the power of legislation over men and manners. To him are due, in substance, the licensing powers of the Lord Cham-

berlain over the theatres of London, and to him was due the Act which, after being for more than a century a byword on the Stock Exchange, was finally repealed in 1860. By that Act Sir John sought to forbid, by penalties, all time-bargains, all refusals and putts, all making up and compounding of differences, all sales and purchases of stock, which were not to be carried out by *bond fide* transfer and delivery. If legislative provisions could have effected such an object, Sir John Barnard's Act could scarcely have failed; but the spirit of speculation is too strong for the trammels of legislation, and the stream, checked in its accustomed course, only finds for itself another and a wider channel.

The immediate cause of Sir John Barnard's Act seems to have been a Report of a Committee of the House of Commons upon certain companies which had been financed in a way disastrous to all concerned in them. The Report of the Committee upon the Charitable Corporation of 1733 is as interesting reading in its way as the Report of the Committee upon Foreign Loans in 1875. In both, curiously enough, the name of Grant figures conspicuously. Sir Archibald Grant, a member of the House, had been concerned largely in the concerns of the York Building Company, which was reported on at the same time, as also in mines in Scotland and Norway. The result was to cause Sir Archibald's expulsion from the House, and to revive in all its bitterness the feeling against stock-jobbing, which had smouldered since 1720. Sir John Barnard's Bill was introduced and passed through the House of Commons, but was thrown out in the House of Lords. In the following year it was passed through both Houses.

It is curious to look back to the

debates and see how the same arguments now in vogue against stock-jobbing and the Stock Exchange found expression at that time. There was no real difference, said Lord Bathurst, between stock-jobbing and gaming. If there were, the difference was in favour of hazard-tables, cock-fighting, and other sorts of public gaming, inasmuch as they were conducted in the open light of the world and not in the corners of Change Alley, and that in them gamesters stood amongst themselves on a fair and equal footing. The South Sea annuities, it was said, in which there was little or no gaming, had always borne a higher price than the South Sea stock, in proportion to the dividends made upon each; their price had always been more certain and invariable than that of any other funds; and no man, unless possessed of something of the spirit of gaming, would prefer the fluctuating chance of loss or gain to the certainty of being always able to realise his original investment. Nor were the arguments of the present day, on the other side, wanting at that time. The Bill, said Sir George Cresswell, instead of being called a Bill for preventing the scandalous practice of stock-jobbing, ought to be called a Bill for the destroying of public credit. Even the argument put forward by the Foreign Loans Committee in 1875 finds its place in the speech of Lord Hervey, that if the Bill were passed, all transactions of such a nature would be carried on upon the Exchange of Amsterdam, and the people of England would be deprived of the profit to be derived from the trade. To this it was replied, that if all our gamesters, as well as the game, were transported thither, it would be no great loss to the nation. The Bill, however, was

carried into law, much to the disappointment of the opponents of the Ministry, who, says Tindal, had hoped to find in the opposition of Walpole a fresh handle of attack against him whom Bolingbroke had termed the Ministerial jobber.

The immediate effect of the Act, in the expectation of friends and foes alike, was to put an end utterly to the trade of stock-jobbing. In the words of a contemporary author, "the bubble burst, and the race-horses of Change Alley" (as time-bargains were then called) "expired with the date of that Act." So little, however, can the effect of legislation be foreseen, that to the very measure designed for its destruction the Stock Exchange of to-day owes its distinctive features.

Any one who compares the Stock Exchange of London with the Bourses of the Continent (a summary of whose customs is given in the evidence of Mr Cohen before the Royal Commission) will be struck with two points. All the Bourses of the Continent, with the partial exception of Vienna, are free of entry to the public. All the Bourses of the Continent are under the control, more or less direct, of the State, or of the municipality. In England the fact that stock-jobbing was for more than a century a trade prohibited and proscribed by law, has left its impress on the restrictions which were from time to time drawn tighter round the right of entry to the Stock Exchange, and which, spite of the alteration of the law, still survive in more than all their former rigour. In England much of the business carried on within its walls was in direct contravention of Act of Parliament,—how, then, could it ask the State or the municipality to grant a sanction to its laws? Add to this the fact, that when the Stock Exchange was

growing into its position of an exclusive society, the usury laws were still in full force, and we have the third distinguishing characteristic of the London market. The Stock Exchange is a market for money as well as stocks. "Abroad," says Mr Cohen, in his evidence before the Commission (3017), "money is not dealt with at all; whereas here, where you have a closed Stock Exchange, it is a constant assistance to bankers and dealers in money of all kinds."

How far this intimate connection between banking and broking is to the benefit of bank shareholders, and how far the system of swollen deposits and pawned stocks may be mixed up with inflated credit and commercial rottenness, is a further question on which we should like to hear Mr Cohen's opinion. Be this as it may, however, the fact is of long standing, and the reason is not far to seek. The Stock Exchange system of loans upon continuation was in its origin a plan for evading the usury laws. Those laws, like Sir John Barnard's Act, have been repealed, but the system which they produced has survived, and has justified its survival by the law of natural selection. The primary causes which made the Stock Exchange a closed market have ceased to operate, but its convenience is such that not even a Royal Commission will go further than to express an opinion that if it were possible it would be desirable that the Stock Exchange should be open to the public.

It was, however, only by degrees that the Stock Exchange became the absolutely closed market which we find it at present. For some time after the passing of Sir John Barnard's Act, business continued to be carried on as before at Jonathan's and the coffee-houses round

it. The business of time-bargains, of bear sales, of putts, and refusals, had, however, to be carried on on honour. The broker who transacted such business had no legal claim upon his client; the client had no hold upon his broker. The contract was illegal. The broker, as well as the principal, was liable to penalties for carrying it out. No names of principals were mentioned, and no receipts given or taken. Hence, as may be imagined, came complaints on both sides. Principals complained that brokers repudiated or shifted bargains in favour of the "House." Brokers complained that after carrying out their bargains with their fellow-brokers they found themselves deserted by their clients.

The natural consequence was to draw closer together the body of men habitually engaged in the business. They became, as they are now, principals to one another; and with the measures adopted for their mutual protection came the first germ of the club system, now fully developed. They were indeed in a dangerous position. Not only were they exposed to the risk of repudiation by their principals, but they were liable also to penalties under Sir John Barnard's Act, and to occasional inroads from the City authorities for practising as brokers without licence. Under such circumstances grew up the rough-and-ready method of dealing with strangers which has survived to our own day. In 1762 we find a record of a stranger thus summarily expelled, in the person of Mr Isaac Renous, who brought an action for his expulsion against Mr Ferres, the master of Jonathan's Coffee-house. The cause was tried at Guildhall. Lord Chief-Justice Mansfield admitted evidence to prove that the house had been a market, time out of mind, for buying and selling Government securi-

ties; and directed the jury to bring in a verdict for the plaintiff, with one shilling damages.

In the time of Lord Kenyon it is said more than 200 actions were brought against persons for penalties under Sir John Barnard's Act; but all failed, owing to the refusal of the brokers first called to give any evidence.

The risks to which they were exposed seem to have led them to gather together into premises more directly under their own control. At some time between the publication of the 1st edition of Mortimer's book in 1761 and the 9th edition in 1782, the brokers, he says, having built a room by subscription opposite the bank, and called it the Stock Exchange, now assemble there to transact their business. This, which is known to the members of the present House as the Old Stock Exchange in Threadneedle Street, remained their place of meeting until the beginning of this century. It appears to have been in Sweetings' Rents or Alley, at the back of the old Royal Exchange, not far from where Lemanns, the biscuit-shop, now stands.

But little is known of the rules and constitution of this House. Its minutes, if there were any, anterior to 1798, have perished. Those which remain are little more than the last will and testament of a dying institution, providing for a successor and for the due appointment of executors and administrators. Something, however, may be gleaned from them, and from the evidence given before a Committee of the House of Commons in 1810. It was, in theory at least, an open market. Any person might enter as freely as into any other coffee-house; but half-way up was a bar, breast-high, at which 6d. had to be paid by every one transacting busi-

ness. That it was frequented principally by persons habitually engaged in business is clear; but whether or not exclusively so, is a point on which the evidence of 1810 is somewhat conflicting. In 1810 the New Stock Exchange had been built, and the market had been closed. A Bill was introduced into Parliament for erecting and incorporating a new open Stock Exchange. Amongst the witnesses called in support of the Bill were several old gentlemen who referred lovingly to the good old days when they could go to Jonathan's or the old House, and offer their stock openly for what it would fetch.

According to other witnesses, principals might come as far as the bar, but the space within was reserved for brokers, and interlopers attracted more notice than they cared for. According to one witness, the manners of that day were not very different from those which rumour says mark the Stock Exchange of to-day, and such as were certainly in full force at no very distant date. The intruder, says one witness, soon found his hat pulled over his eyes, his pockets filled with crackers, and himself hustled out without ceremony. Whether any of our readers have been venturesome enough to tempt the Stock Exchange of to-day we do not know, but rumour says they might fare somewhat the same.

During the last few years of the old House, it seems to have been managed by a committee, and many of the existing rules and regulations date at any rate in substance from that time. "Lame ducks" were posted on the black board, "as not deserving the future confidence of this House;" defaulters' estates were wound up by the committee, and they themselves, if it appeared

that they had acted in every respect as honest men, were received again "with that tenderness and humanity every unfortunate man deserves." Some may think that "tenderness and humanity" have of late been carried somewhat too far by the authorities when they find from the Report of the Commission that out of 105 defaulters readmitted during the last ten years, the conduct of 93 has been avowedly marked by indiscretion and the absence of reasonable caution.

There is no single period of excitement connected with the House in Threadneedle Street comparable to the South Sea Bubble or the crisis of 1825; but the period of its existence was almost one prolonged financial struggle. The War of American Independence and the Treaty of Versailles had left England exhausted and dismembered. The funds in 1782 had fallen as low as 53. Scarcely had the sagacity and prudence of the younger Pitt restored in some degree the credit of the nation when the war of the French Revolution once more strained its resources to the utmost. Loan followed loan, and the debt increased by leaps and bounds. Lotteries tempted subscribers to their ruin, and spread the spirit of gambling through all classes. At such a time the Stock Exchange reaped golden harvests. There was no need of companies to attract the unwary when Government itself was ready to scrape together all the savings of the country. Bargains in the scrip of each new loan partly or fully paid, bargains to take or deliver lottery-tickets at the drawing, gave ample scope for the jobbers of the day. They were reviled by their contemporaries as usurers and extortioners—men who fattened on the distress of the nation, and made profits out

of the embarrassments of the Government; but still the fact remains. The money which was required was found for the service of the State, and the credit of the country in its darkest hour was the hope of its allies, and the despair of its enemies. One instance alone must suffice. The Loyalty Loan of 1796 was an answer flung in the face of the French Directory when it believed the resources of England to be wellnigh exhausted. The whole sum of eighteen millions was subscribed in four days in the space of fifteen hours and twenty minutes. The Bank of England in its corporate capacity subscribed one million, and each of the directors £400,000. No one can believe that each of the directors had £400,000 to pay down, or that they intended to hold the stock for which they had subscribed. The loan is merely the most striking instance of the confidence of the moneyed classes, and the way in which the market was prepared to take the vast quantities of stock thrown upon it.

With the end of the century came the last change in the position of the Stock Exchange, and the birth of the society in its present shape. The last year or two of the century had seen the institution of a permanent Committee at the old House, and an attempt to control by its authority the turbulent democracy which frequented it. The measures seem to have been only partially successful. On the 12th of January 1801 was held a meeting of proprietors, at which it was determined to convert the Stock Exchange coffee-house into a subscription-room. The meeting is remarkable for the name of its chairman. It was presided over by Benjamin D'Israeli, the bearer of a name which his grandson has made famous in history. The resolution

was passed. On the 27th of February the Stock Exchange was closed to the public, and the Committee proceeded to elect by ballot the privileged members of the new society. Almost immediately afterwards steps were taken to procure more convenient quarters; and on the 18th of May, with due pomp and ceremony, was laid the first stone of the new Stock Exchange in a "central" situation in Capel Court.

It was not until March in the next year that the new Stock Exchange was ready for the accommodation of its members. The Committee met in the meanwhile at the Antwerp and other taverns, and there, in the month of February, the accounts of the old House were finally made up, and the books and papers handed over to the new proprietors. In March 1802 the first meeting was held in the new buildings, and the first resolution passed by the Committee. The rules of the new society were not formally put into shape, and published for the use of its members, until 1812; but many of the rules and regulations then passed were based on previous resolutions of the Committee. Some of these resolutions appear to show a laudable desire on the part of the Committee to check the uncontrolled spirit of gambling, which then, as now, brought discredit upon the institution. With regard to options forbidden under penalties by Sir John Barnard's Act, the Committee declare as follows:—

"Bargains for putts and calls being not only illegal, but highly injurious to the interests of this House, the Committee do unanimously resolve that in all future failure of members, no bargain by which a higher price of stock shall be agreed upon to be paid for the option of putting stock at a lower price,

or for the sale of stock at a lower price for the option of calling for any stock at a higher price, or money given or agreed to be given for either putt or call of stock, shall be admitted either directly or indirectly as claim against any defaulter."

The attempt was laudable, but it broke down; and although a similar regulation appears in the published rules of 1812, it finds no place in the present code of the Stock Exchange. On the other hand, it is a curious fact that, whilst such bargains were illegal by statute, and were discountenanced by the Committee of the Stock Exchange, they were of constant occurrence. At the present time, if we may trust the evidence given before the Royal Commission, they have very much gone out of fashion. (Evid. 827.)

One change of considerable importance seems to have resulted from the establishment of the new Stock Exchange. In the old House, any one who chose might frequent the rooms. Membership was a matter of custom, not of election, and no person was debarred from entrance by reason of his trade or profession. The frequenters of the old Stock Exchange are spoken of contemptuously by Mortimer as "the medley of barbers, bakers, butchers, shoemakers, plaisterers, and taylors which the mammon of unrighteousness has transformed into stock-brokers." A cobbler, it is said, who left his stall to go upon the Stock Exchange, realised near £60,000. A carpenter who found the work of the plane and chisel too hard turned jobber, and boasted of being worth £300,000; whilst a certain notorious boat-builder is said to have realised more than the two together. In the new House, this was changed. Those who had been habitual frequenters of the old

House were admitted to the new, and in 1810 some forty persons in trade, including coal-merchants and brewers, were members of the Stock Exchange. For new members, however the rule was strict, that no person engaged in other business should be admitted to the society. This rule was extended even to persons whose wives were engaged in business, and is still to be found in the regulations of the Stock Exchange. In its origin it was designed to avoid any conflict between the jurisdiction of the Committee and the Court of Bankruptcy in the case of defaulters. Its success in this respect may be estimated by the fact that, down to the year 1876, there was only one case to be found in the reports of any direct conflict between the two. In 1856 a claim was made on behalf of the legal representatives of a bankrupt against the official assignee of the Stock Exchange, but it was held that the whole transactions being illegal under Sir John Barnard's Act, the payment to the assignee had been voluntary, and could not be recovered by the bankrupt's estate. In 1876, on the contrary, it was determined that bankruptcy annulled the arrangement in the Stock Exchange, and that the assignee might be called upon to refund the money which he had received.

The rule of exclusion, like many others, has thus outlived the reason for its existence. The law of bankruptcy now applies to all transactions on the Stock Exchange and outside alike, and the conflict of jurisdiction which it was intended to prevent may arise any day at the suit of a butcher or a baker. Trade debts are no longer the only subjects of bankruptcy, and without trading, members of the Stock Exchange may easily incur liabilities

outside the House larger than can be liquidated by the rough-and-ready process indicated by Mr Underhill and Mr Tomkins. Under such circumstances it might be a question for the Committee whether they should not relax the rule, bred of suspicion and illegality, and admit within their walls all who are ready to accept their terms, regardless of what other business engagements they may have.

There is no doubt indeed, that the real feeling against the Stock Exchange has its root in the idea that it is a combination of privileged persons working in the interest of one another, and against the general public. The idea is not a new one. "The House are all bulls for the rescouter," says one pamphleteer of the eighteenth century. To do him justice, the charge was the reverse of that which is usual. In most cases, from the days of Boyd and Goldsmidt down to the days of the Agra and Masterman, the Stock Exchange bear has been regarded as the root of all evil. He bangs down the market, he depresses public credit, he defrauds the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he ruins the *bond fide* stockholder. The meaning of all this is, that there is generally more outside speculation open for the rise than for the fall, and that whereas contango is a common occurrence on the Stock Exchange, backwardation is, comparatively speaking, rare. The constant payment of contango presses on the weak speculator, and as account after account comes round he is forced to give in. The moral is the same as is to be drawn in all other walks of life. The amateur cannot expect to compete with the professional. If he can devote as much time to speculation as gentlemen cricketers devote to cricket, he ceases to be an amateur.

In that case let him go upon the Stock Exchange, and let the Stock Exchange, if necessary, relax its rules sufficiently to admit him. The mere opening of the Stock Exchange would do little to assist him, unless he were prepared to devote his whole time and energies to the business.

The idea that the House is all on one side and the public on the other, though less true in the present day, when the House numbers more than 2000 members, than it was in the days when the House numbered 400, has still some truth in it. In old days it was the House against the public; in these days it is an interest in the House, which may coincide more or less with an interest outside the House, against the general public. In a pamphlet written in 1816 we find the old idea set out. It is notorious, says the author, that a jobber was never known to waddle since the Stock Exchange was formed; and though he qualifies this remark by saying that it applies only to real, true jobbers, not to those who were half-and-half brokers, the inference is obvious. In the figures furnished to the Royal Commission, the number of jobbers declared defaulters in the last ten years was 104; that of brokers, 161. Of these the largest in amount was a jobber who failed in 1872 for £82,105, and was readmitted into the 3d class in 1876 on payment of 11s. 9½d. in the pound.

The real truth to be recognised by the outside public is that they are always operating with the turn of the market against them. The turn may be small compared with that which exists in other markets, but it is constant, and in the long-run it tells against the outside speculator. Syndicates there may be outside the Stock Exchange as well as in; and

in small stocks, as Houghton long ago remarked, 'tis easy for a small number of men in confederacy to raise or lower prices. To the individual who has neither the turn of the market in his favour, nor a syndicate to back him, speculation must, sooner or later, mean ruin and disgrace. The causes which he trusts will bring him fortune fail him at the crisis. The event happens for which he has been waiting, and he finds it has been discounted long before by other operators. The state of the market—the balance of the account of which he knows but little, and that from hearsay only—defies his calculations, and the expected gain turns out a loss. In the long-run the main causes which affect all prices will assert their sway in Stock Exchange securities as well as other things; but, meanwhile, the speculator in the House perceives the earliest symptoms of the change. To him change is the breath of life; stagnation is death. The rise and fall of markets is his trade, and one perpetual flux his philosophic creed. He watches every variation with a practised eye, and whilst following the main current of events, he can baffle and bewilder his opponent by availing himself of all the eddies of the stream. If the outside speculator have equal time and energy to devote to the game, well; if not, let him eschew speculation, or at least, if he must tempt Providence in the unequal match, let him cease to rail at Fortune when she comes to him in the shape of the inevitable. To the isolated gambler, who must realise without delay, the system of the Stock Exchange seems always to snatch from him the prize within his grasp by unexpected fluctuations; to the investor who can bide his time, the system tends to keep these fluctuations within compara-

tively narrow limits. The bull of to-day must become the bear of to-morrow, and every speculative sale or purchase must ultimately be balanced by a corresponding operation. When real causes operate, and a genuine panic takes effect, it proves fatal alike to country bankers and to Stock Exchange jobbers, as is proved by the disastrous list of fifty-five failures in 1870, mostly owing to the French and German war.

The whole question of a close as against an open market was discussed before a Committee of the House of Commons in 1810 on a private Bill for the erection of a new open Stock Exchange, and the incorporation of its members. All the arguments which have been brought forward of late were urged on that occasion. The secrecy of the proceedings, the belief that prices charged by brokers to their clients did not correspond with the prices within the House, the complaint that brokers acted in a double capacity as both agents and principals, that the names of defaulters were not made public, and that their estates were divided within the House in fraud of their creditors outside, were all set forth. Witnesses were examined and cross-examined, and as much difficulty was found in extracting an explanation of the term "double bargain" in 1810 as in getting at the meaning of the term "pocket order" in 1875. In the end, however, the Bill was dismissed, and the Stock Exchange confirmed in its exclusive position. That position it still occupies. In some respects, indeed, it is even more exclusive, for the rotunda of the Bank of England was closed as a stock market about 1837. Since that time there have been several attempts to form a new and open

market, the last we saw advertised only a few weeks ago as the "Co-operative Stock Exchange, Limited." Members of the House point to the failure of such schemes to show that, in spite of suspicion and complaint, people who have wares to buy or sell still come to the old shop to do their business.

One point in favour of a closed market, suggested rather than urged in 1810, has, in the interval, grown into a consideration of importance. In 1797 a Stock receipt had been picked up, appropriated, and the money wrongfully obtained in the old Stock Exchange—and the fact was used as an argument against indiscriminate admission. Since then, the value of property to bearer, transferred from hand to hand, and lying about the Stock Exchange on settling days, has increased a thousand-fold. The argument against free admission, such as it is, is proportionately strengthened. Whether the difficulty is insuperable is another question. The Bankers' Clearing-house and the Stock Exchange Clearing-house itself show what can be done to diminish the number of transfers; and free admission to a market does not necessarily mean admission to all parts. The question of a close or open market is a large one, and we should have been glad to have seen it discussed at greater length in the Report of the Commission. On the one hand is the ease and facility in the transaction of business which arise from all persons directly concerned in it being members of the same association, and subject to the same rules. On the other hand is the inevitable suspicion and dissatisfaction which exist, and always will exist, on the part of the public, that their interests are not properly secured.

A minor point to which the Com-

missioners refer is the "marking" of business done. At present, as our readers are aware, the Stock Exchange official list contains two columns: one with the nominal quotations, at which business is supposed to close at three o'clock; the other, the list of "markings," in which the prices of all bargains actually done are supposed to appear, for the information of the outside world. We quite agree with the Commissioners that no pains should be spared to make the list of "markings" as complete and faithful a record as possible. We would even have gone further. We would have given any principal a legal right to repudiate any bargain done at a price which did not appear in the official list. It is the duty of the broker to mark his bargains, and it should be his interest likewise. We are of course aware that bargains may be done before or after official hours, when no markings can be made; and that bargains in small bonds are difficult to mark, because they are in the nature of special bargains. The answer to all this is obvious. If the broker deals for his client out of official hours, and gets a better price, the client is not likely to object: if he gets a worse price, he had no right to deal without special authority. With regard to small bonds, the suggestion made by Mr Ingall (5097) that there should be a separate marking for amounts under £500 seems unobjectionable. In any regulations to be made upon the subject, it is to be remembered that they may be always varied by special agreements, and in certain cases always would be. There may be occasions on which secrecy as to prices may be imperatively necessary in the interests of large operators, and it may be worth their

while to pay a higher price than the official quotation without demur. They, however, are not the persons to be considered. They may be left to take care of themselves. They and their brokers understand each other, and neither party stands in need of protection. The persons who require protection are the class of small investors generally; and in such cases it should no longer be within the power of dishonest brokers to manipulate prices at their will, or to charge their clients for bargains which they dare not mark on the official list. The interest of the *bond fide* investor is the pivot round which the system of the Stock Exchange works; and it can only be because his interest is indirectly furthered by the ebb and flow of speculation that that which is not altogether unjustly termed a gigantic gambling mart is recognised and approved of in the heart of London. Anything, therefore, which tends to secure to him the justice to which he is entitled, is a measure no less in the interests of the Stock Exchange than of the public.

Not a little capital was made in 1810 out of the conduct of the Stock Exchange in 1803. In that year one of the most celebrated hoaxes in its history had been perpetrated. Hoaxes have been common since the days when stock-jobbing began, and the news so often noised abroad from interested motives that Queen Anne was dead has passed into a proverb. The hoaxes, however, of 1803 and 1814 claim special mention. On the 5th of May 1803, a letter purporting to be from Lord Hawkesbury, the Foreign Secretary, to the Lord Mayor, was posted on the Mansion House, announcing that negotiations between England and the French Republic had been brought to an

amicable conclusion. The funds rose instantly, and large purchases and sales were effected for outside accounts. The letter had arrived at ten o'clock. At one o'clock came news from the Treasury that it was a forgery. The funds at once fell seven per cent. One member of the House, bolder than the rest, proposed a general repudiation of bargains, and the proposal was carried by acclamation. Sir John Barnard's Act was then in force, bargains were all on honour, and the House, free from all legal interference, wiped off at once the liabilities in which they were involved. The public in vain remonstrated. They were powerless at the time, but the conduct of the House was thrown in its teeth for many years subsequently, and it was remarked with bitterness that when all other bargains were cancelled, the purchases made by the Government broker at the highest prices of the day were rigorously enforced. The hoax of 1814, announcing the death of Bonaparte, is almost too well known to need repetition. The deep-laid scheme in which Berenger and Lord Cochrane were implicated, has been lately again brought back to prominence, as a legal precedent in the somewhat similar prosecution in the case of the Eupion Gas Company, and as an historical question with reference to the claims of Lord Dundonald. In this case, as in 1803, men complained that whereas hoaxes by which the public were "dusted" in favour of the House passed by unnoticed, hoaxes directed against the interest of the House were made the subject of special proceedings. It was broadly insinuated that all the influences of a Tory Government were brought to bear against the friend of Cobbett and the Whig member for Westminster, and that a new offence had

been created to gratify the gentlemen of the Stock Exchange. Certainly, if it be a criminal offence to conspire together to raise or lower the price of the public funds, it is an offence which must often have been committed, though never perhaps with such circumstantiality and success as by De Berenger and his associates.

If war brought its profits to the Stock Exchange, it brought its risks no less; and, in passing, it is curious to note a fact which brings home to us the danger of invasion which hung over our shores. On the 16th April 1804, a special meeting of the Committee was summoned to discuss the measures to be taken in the event of the Bank of England being closed "when the invasion takes place." So close did the peril seem at that time. The day however came, and the subject was dismissed as premature.

Peace brought to the Stock Exchange a cessation of those annual loans which had found employment for its members; but with the fall of Napoleon came the first loan to the French negotiated in London—the precursor of the first era of foreign loans. Whether Sir Robert Walpole did well or ill in forbidding loans to Foreign States, and whether such loans have or have not been profitable, upon the whole, to the English nation, is a question upon which we are not prepared to enter. It is a question on which, to judge from the evidence before the Royal Commission, Mr Cohen and Mr Medley appear to hold very different views. Looked at purely from the political, and not from the economical, point of view, it would be curious to know how much of the burning indignation of the last two years against Bulgarian atrocities was due to Turkish default, and how much of the philanthropic

faith in Russian promises proceeded from the trembling holders of Russian bonds.

Be this as it may, the year 1822 witnessed the commencement of a speculation which culminated in a crisis such as had not been known since the South Sea Bubble. By 1824 foreign loans to the nominal amount of more than 34 millions had been issued in this country. In 1825 began the inevitable collapse. Chili and Brazil led the way with failures more or less redeemed in later years. Peru the penniless and Paraguay are to be found side by side as in the records of 1875. Poyais, an independent state of Honduras, borrowed £200,000, on the personal security of Gregor MacGregor, the *cacique* of the country, and proved a worthy precursor of its present representative by failing to provide the interest on a single coupon. Its scrip, adorned with all the high-flown titles of its author, long served the turn of petty jobbers, and may even now occasionally be found preserved as a curiosity of the time. Along with these ventures from the New World just starting into existence, came appeals from countries having a claim upon the patriotic or the sentimental interest of the English nation. Spain and Portugal contracted obligations for which they are wholly or partially in default at this day. Greece drew from the pockets of sympathising bondholders the loans for two million pounds, the interest on which has been suspended now for fifty years.

The speculation of the period seems to have been insatiable. The political fate of nations hung in the balance of the stock markets. The operations of Mr Rothschild and the London financiers it is said created an excitement scarcely inferior to the march of armies. The

troops themselves, as Sydney Smith wittily remarked, advanced to the cry of "scrip and omnium," "reduced and 3 per cents." Following in the wake of foreign loans and politico-financial speculations came the more usual devices of the ingenious promoter. Foreign mines with a nominal capital of more than 24 millions, more than 600 industrial companies calculated at nearly 400 millions, stimulated the appetites of the small investor. As on all such occasions, charity and self-help, profit and philanthropy, went hand in hand. The same touching sympathy with the poor which produced the charitable Corporation of 1733, produced the Equitable Loan Company of 1825, and has since been the fruitful parent of more doubtful children in the shape of companies for workmen's dwellings, and other philanthropic objects. Designed to relieve the industrious poor from the usurious exactions of the pawnbroker, and at the same time promising to its shareholders a dividend of 40 per cent, the Equitable Loan Company was one merely of the many schemes by which the unwary were lured to their destruction. Nor was the speculation confined to the Stock Exchange and its surroundings. Gambling in produce was another sign of the same spirit. The markets were glutted, the warehouses filled, speculative purchases were made as if prices must be always on the rise, and by the end of 1825 the ruin and consternation were widespread. As usual, upon the Stock Exchange was concentrated the wrath of those who had speculated and lost.

As may be supposed, the building in Capel Court proved too small for all the transactions of the day. As bargains in 1720 were made and unmade in all the courts and

passages of Change Alley, so in 1825 there appears to have existed outside the recognised House an open market, somewhat like the *Petite Bourse* of Paris. In this new Stock Exchange, says a pamphlet of the day, all might come and go, and no inconvenient questions were asked. It was the resort of those who had failed to obtain admission to the House, or had "waddled" after admission. Prices were regulated by the dealings in Capel Court, and settling days were instituted. Unfortunately, when prices went against the *habitués* of the place, and there were heavy differences to settle, the number of those who appeared was limited, and consisted of those who had to receive and not to pay.

A third market open and officially recognised for the British funds existed at the same time, and had long existed, in the rotunda of the Bank of England, specially set apart by the directors for that purpose. "*Botany Bay*," as it was styled contemptuously by members of the House, reproduced, on a smaller scale, the same features; and whilst my Lord speculated in his thousands in Capel Court, my Lord's footman turned bear of £50 in the rotunda.

The distinctive feature of the time, however, was the institution of a Foreign Stock Exchange for dealers in the new securities introduced in 1822. Hitherto the dealers in foreign funds, such as they were, had remained on their walk in 'Change; now they assembled together in a building adjoining the Stock Exchange in Capel Court. The new society had its rules and its committee analogous to, but independent of, the earlier body, and the two existed side by side till amalgamated in 1835. By decisions of the courts of law it

was held that dealings in these foreign funds were not affected by Sir John Barnard's Act, and the distinction thus created was the first step towards a repeal of that Act.

Since the year 1825 panics have recurred with startling regularity at almost fixed intervals, corresponding according to one ingenious theory with the period of recurring sun-spots. Whether it be the influence of the sun on Eastern harvests, or whether it be the natural forgetfulness of a comparatively new generation, certain it is that every ten years or so results generically the same reproduce themselves after a like fashion. In 1835, in 1846, in 1857, in 1866, and in the prolonged crisis which has gone on since 1875, events have followed much the same course.

In 1836 the default of Portugal and other countries caused a series of failures on the Stock Exchange which, as it was said, made its members change their carriages for wheel-barrow. The default of foreign states was followed by a bankers' panic, aggravated by a corresponding tightness in America, which caused the suspension of no less than 250 houses in New York, and an almost universal suspension of cash payments. In 1846 the Legislature sanctioned the raising of 110 millions of capital for railways, and the enormous increase of fixed at the expense of floating capital, led to its natural results. Calls were made which could not be met. Railway scrip, which had been sought for as gold, became a drug in the market, and the fate of Hudson the railway king forms a parallel to events of our own day. The panic of 1857 was mainly a bankers' panic, but it was followed by a Stock Exchange panic in 1859, which proved fatal to no less than

seventy members in the month of May alone. The events of 1866 are fresh in the memory of men; and so far as the Stock Exchange is concerned, they are remarkable principally for having resulted in what is known as Leeman's Act. This Act, which was designed to prevent bear sales of bank shares, by declaring contracts void which did not give the number of shares offered for sale, enjoys the singular advantage of being the object of attack from two opposite sides. On the Stock Exchange it has been declared on high authority* to be inoperative and impracticable. In other quarters it has been declared to have given undue protection to bank shares, and to have been responsible for some of the extraordinary phenomena lately witnessed of banks wholly insolvent being quoted in the official list at 100-150 premium. On the other hand, there have not been wanting those who have maintained that the possibility of the Act being put in force against interested sellers has tended of late to prevent bear sales where rumours of difficulties have been in the wind, and has thus averted the beginning of a run which might have led to a fatal end. Be this as it may, Leeman's Act is the legacy of legislation left to the Stock Exchange by the last panic, and its success has not been so assured as to encourage fresh attempts in the present instance.

The present instance is no exception to the general rule.

The feeling against the Stock Exchange which culminated in the late Commission, was the ordinary feeling against the mystery of a close market, brought to a point

by the sudden failure of many schemes brought out with great apparent profit to the stock-jobbers and certain loss to the subscribers.

Upon the general question of a close or open market we have said our say. The Commissioners, as we have pointed out, have come to no definite conclusion, and have made no definite suggestion. Upon the special circumstances, the gravamen of the charge has been the hall-marking, as it has been termed, of certain goods by the Stock Exchange. The Stock Exchange grants settlement and quotation to certain schemes. It is known to have refused the so-called privilege to others. The favoured schemes involve the shareholders and bondholders in ruin. Then comes the complaint. The Stock Exchange sells bad goods instead of sound; its hall-marking is no guarantee for quality. The complaint is founded on a misconception. The business of the Stock Exchange is like any other business. Men who belong to a profession must live by their profession. The greater the number of stocks, and the more frequent the fluctuations, the greater the number of commissions and turns find their way into the pockets of the House. All schemes, good, bad, and indifferent alike, find welcome there in busy times. Everything which brings grist to the mill is acceptable to its members. The ordeal of settlement and quotation is in truth no ordeal at all so far as it implies any guarantee of stability to the public. The inquiries before the Foreign Loans Committee and the Royal Commission have at least set this question at rest. The rules of the Stock Exchange are directed

* See Mr Cohen's evidence, Foreign Loans Committee (5214); Mr Price's evidence, Royal Commission (1725).

simply and solely to securing to their own members a free market among themselves, free from "rigs" and "cornerings." Incidentally they may coincide in some points with suggestions often made and sometimes embodied in Acts of Parliament for the protection of the public, and incidentally they may have afforded to the public some protection in certain cases. Primarily, however, they have been for the protection of members of the House in their dealings with one another. This was tolerably clear from the Report of 1875—it is made perfectly clear by the Report and evidence of the Royal Commission. There has been no instance of the absolute refusal of a special settlement in the case of a loan, says Mr Levien (App. p. 368). And why so? Surely not because there have been no rotten loans issued by dishonest Governments? No: but because, says Mr Cohen, speaking as an expert on the question of loans, such manoeuvres as cornerings occur chiefly with the concocters of unprincipled companies (Evid. 3209). In other words, we take it, the amount of a loan is sufficient to insure safe dealing to the jobbers, even if, as in the case of Paraguay, £1,400,000 out of a nominal £2,000,000 has been bought back before settlement with the money of the State (Evid. 3216).

Again, with regard to companies, out of the six cases specially reported on by the Commission, one only failed to obtain a settlement, the Australian and Eastern Steam Navigation Co., which, to judge from the evidence, was not the least *bond fide* of the six. The explanation is given in the Report. In the Australian Steam case, whether the Company were a *bond fide* scheme or not, the jobbers were at the mercy of certain persons who had

bought largely before allotment. We, the directors, says Mr Tyndall Bright, refused to buy a settlement by surrendering our shares (Evid. 5964); that is, we refused to give up our power of cornering the bears. Settlement was refused in accordance with the rules of the Stock Exchange. On the other hand, in the Peruvian Railways Company, which, to judge from the evidence, had no sound point about it, "a threat of opposition was actually withdrawn by means of satisfying some of the dealers, and the settlement granted in consequence" (Rep. p. 17). In the case of the still more notorious Marseilles Land Company, settlement and quotation were granted without discussion. We mention these cases, not for the purpose of bringing odium upon the Stock Exchange, but of bringing home to the public the fact that the rules are designed for the protection of members against unfair combinations, and not for the protection of the public against unsound schemes. We have referred to them at greater length because the question of settlement and quotation is closely mixed up with the question of dealing before allotment, and the two together are mainly responsible for the special evils which led to the appointment of the Commission. The buying and selling of shares not yet allotted, the manufacture of a short-lived premium, and the quotation of these dealings in the press, are the baits by which the public are drawn in. The power to oppose or to permit the granting of a special settlement is the postern gate by which the brokers and dealers who have been engaged in "making a market" or supporting the issue, reserve to themselves the means of getting out. The Commissioners, seeing that the

rules as to special settlements are mainly designed to counteract possible evils in dealing before allotment, propose to prohibit by law all such dealings in foreign loans or new companies. If this suggestion should be adopted, they seem to assume that the necessity for special settlements would disappear (Rep. p. 19). We should have preferred the reverse proceeding. If special settlements were not abolished, but followed as a matter of course in all cases in which there were bargains to settle, those who use dealings before allotment for reckless or dishonest purposes, would be taught a lesson of caution, whilst there would be no interference with the general freedom of dealing.

In this view we find both Mr Cohen and Mr Michael from within and from without coincide. Mr Cohen says (Evid. 2882) that the knowledge that every bargain must be settled, would prevent the perpetration of such frauds as the Eupion Gas case, for example, where more shares were sold than were in existence. Mr Michael thinks (Evid. 8239) that it would tend at least as much as, if not more than, the abolition by law of dealings before allotment, to prevent people actually selling before allotment. Both witnesses agree in saying that the uncertainty which at present attends the grant of a settlement, and the chance of such an arrangement as that in the Peruvian Railways Company, are the direct encouragement to bear sales before allotment. And yet on the readiness to sell depends the rigging of the market, by purchasers, on behalf of the promoters. Stopped at one earth, no doubt they would soon find for themselves another; but if a remedy be sought at all, it must be sufficient if it meet the present evil. In any gen-

eral prohibition as recommended by the Commissioners, we confess that we have not much faith.

Stocks and shares are essentially merchandise like corn, tallow, or indigo. Corn, tallow, and indigo are sold, for delivery at a future date, by men who have not, and may never have, the goods to deliver. The days are past when judges could tell juries that such contracts were a gambling transaction, and could not be enforced at law: the days are still to come when the same principles will be recognised as generally applicable to Stock Exchange transactions. Horse-racing, gaming-tables, and cock-fighting may be regulated, restricted, or prohibited, because no element of real commerce enters into the exchange of money. In stock-jobbing it is otherwise; and the problem which has defied solution from Sir John Barnard to the Royal Commissioners has been, to have special legislation which will hit the evil and leave untouched the good. As with the question of dealing before allotment, so with the larger question of speculation as a whole. Only one proposal with which we have met seems really self-acting; and it is worth noticing that the subject was taken up and dropped by the Commissioners on grounds which, if just, are a sufficient answer to all special legislation whatever. Stock Exchange contract notes between client and broker, as is well known, bear at present a penny stamp. The actual transfer deeds of stocks transferable by deed bear a heavy *ad valorem* duty. For every transfer deed there are in the ordinary course of business a great number of contract notes. The transfer deed, speaking roughly, represents the *bonâ fide* holder of stock who is selling, and the *bonâ fide* investor who is buying. The

contract notes represent the intermediate speculators, selling stock they do not hold, and buying what they cannot pay for. Roughly we have here a distinction between investment business and speculation. The *bond fide* investor pays the *ad valorem* duty—the speculator pays nothing but the penny contract stamp. The proposal had been made that for the penny stamp should be instituted an *ad valorem* duty on the contract note—that is to say, that the man who bought and sold for differences should, in proportion to his nominal purchase, contribute as much to the revenue as the *bond fide* investor. There may be many sound reasons why some such plan would be impracticable, but the answer which the Commissioners received from witnesses, and which seemed to them conclusive, was that such a change would interfere with arbitrage business.

No doubt it is true that it would, if really enforced, interfere with arbitrage business. That class of business has been described as operating by telegraph between different Bourses, and taking advantage of the inequality in prices. The margin of profit is so small that any tax upon it for the benefit of the revenue would make it altogether disappear. In what respect, however, does arbitrage business differ from ordinary speculation, or who would be the losers supposing it were to disappear? Mr Crews draws a distinction (Evid. 6925) between arbitrage business and speculative business; but he himself admits that it is hard to say what is speculative business, except in relation to the means of the speculator. The practical result of the large arbitrage business carried on by Mr Crews is the same on a greater scale as the petty operations of the smallest jobber who cuts in

and out in a single day. In each case the ready play of Exchange, the existence of men willing and anxious to balance one speculation with another at a profit small or great, steadies the market, and tends to keep prices at a level. London at present is the centre of arbitrage business on a small scale between provincial Exchanges. The large dealers do and undo their business in international stocks in Paris and Vienna as the Manchester or Glasgow broker undoes in London the bargain in rails which he has transacted for his client. The amount is different, the time is longer, the profit may be larger, but the principle is the same. If the Commissioners admit that it is undesirable to interfere with arbitrage business as such, they virtually concede the principle that speculation which levels the markets is an advantage to the *bond fide* investor.

We have strayed somewhat from our historical account of the Stock Exchange, but in truth, the lessons of its history are to be gathered from its earlier pages. The legislation to which the Stock Exchange owes its existence has been repealed. Sir John Barnard's Act was repealed in 1860; the rotunda of the Bank of England was closed in 1837; and, spite of sundry endeavours from time to time to form a so-called open market, the Stock Exchange of Capel Court has remained the sole mart in London, the centre of all business transactions. Scandals, no doubt, there have been, as in all professions; and it would not be difficult for the curious in such matters to cull from the fleeting literature of the day, matter for a tolerably long indictment. The point, however, to be determined is, whether or not the Stock Exchange has, on the whole, fulfilled its functions satisfactorily,

and whether or not previous legislation gives us much to hope from parliamentary interference. The Royal Commission ended their Report with a suggestion that the Stock Exchange should be incorporated by Royal Charter or Act of Parliament. If incorporation be a formal measure merely for the benefit of the Stock Exchange, the answer is obvious: they can obtain the benefits at present under the Companies Acts. If it be intended to confer on them a benefit, and at the same time to impose upon them restrictions, the best answer is to be found in a summary of their history. For more than 100 years the business of the Stock Exchange was under the ban of the law. For more than 100 years brokers had to take an oath not to meet or assemble in Change Alley. For more than 100 years the rotunda of the Bank of England was open as an authorised and recognised market. The place established and protected by law waned, the place founded by voluntary efforts and proscribed

by law grew and flourished. The moral is ready to hand.

It is the idea of the old Greek poet when he said—

“Nor ships nor towers avail,
Reft of their strength, if men to man
them fail.”*

It is the dealers who make the market, and not the building or the name. To form a corporation and to find a suitable building is the smallest part of the difficulty. The real difficulty would be to transfer to any new establishment the mass of business and the network of interests which have grown up of their own accord round the present building. To find a buyer or a seller when they want to sell or buy, is the convenience which men look for. This convenience the present Stock Exchange will give them, and at no immoderate price. The price which they must pay is the profit on which stock-jobbing as a trade depends. In stock-jobbing, as in other trades, the rate of profit and of wage is best left to find its level for itself.

* Soph., O. T. 54.

ST NEOT'S IN CORNWALL.

Who ever thinks, as the Penzance train jogs slowly on over those wonderful and dangerous-looking wooden viaducts, that three miles from Doublebois station is to be seen some of the best sixteenth-century glass in England? That is too much the way with us English; we habitually pass by some of the most interesting things in our own country. And then, when we've been persuaded to spend a week at Land's End or any such out-of-the-way corner, we complain that there's nothing to see but rocks and blue water, and that we've been deluded down under false pretences. We forget that what lies along the road forms part of the attraction, and that it would be quite possible to get our tourist's ticket endorsed for a place like Doublebois. The Germans are more patriotic; they go abroad to make money, but they mostly stay at home to spend it: whereas the Englishman never thinks he gets a thorough change unless he goes outside his own islands.

No doubt it is a grand thing to hear a foreign tongue, and to have your food sold under foreign names and for foreign money. But have you tried South Wales? Caermarthen market is as un-English as that of Rouen, barring the red and yellow umbrellas—much more un-English in speech than any market between Ostend and Danzig. And as for castles and cathedrals, Caerphilly and Cardiff, with Llandaff close to them, form a group which you can scarcely rival abroad.

But I am thinking of West Wales, as Cornwall used to be called. There has been no Welsh spoken there for more than a century; there are not many castles,

though the late Norman telescope-keep of Launceston is very unlike most keeps in England, and though Tintagel ought (in spite of Mr Freeman's wrath at our fondness for King Arthur) to count for as much as Falaise; there is, as yet, no cathedral; there are no very grand churches; no glorious abbeys like Rievaulx, or Melrose, or Holy-cross—all Cornwall never could boast one mitred abbot. But that is no reason why, when you go west of Tamar, you should hasten on to Lizard and Land's End, and think you've done your duty if you've seen a few miles of cliff, and a logging (or rocking) stone, and three or four cromlechs, and a stone circle, and perhaps a cave-dwelling or a newly-opened barrow.

Cromlechs and stone circles are all very well; but they are far more easily imagined by those who have only seen drawings of them than church architecture or stained glass. One cromlech is pretty much like another. I saw "the Hurlers" the other day, and doubted if the sight was worth a long drive over the moor, though they are the remains of what, I believe, is unique—three stone circles, intersecting, with their centres in a line. Nor did I care much for the Cheese Wring, propped up as it now is by a pillar of smaller stones to protect it from the shocks of blasting, and threatening to topple over into the quarry which soon will have been pushed right up to its base. The Cheese Wring is, like scores of rock-masses round it—like Queen Elizabeth at Bodruthan steps, like Bowerman's Nose and others on the Dartmoor tors, like our old friend the "toad-rock" near Tunbridge Wells—a strange in-

stance of how rocks get water-worn into all sorts of artificial-looking shapes. It is what the old books call a *lusus naturæ*. I wonder if Sir John Lubbock has put it into his bill; for of course the Druids were credited with it, as they were with the little hollows which rain-drip has worked into the shape of gigantic tadpoles in the surface of so many granite slabs. These hollows were named "rock-basins, in which the blood of the sacrifices was collected." And a whole system of worship was based on what everybody now knows to be no more artificial than the rocks on which they are found.

You can see all this sort of thing round Penzance, and plenty of it; but for churches, such as you would go out of your way to see abroad, you must stop at St Germans and walk up from Doublebois to St Neot's. St Germans, with its two western towers and its Norman west front, is the only Cornish church that looks in the least like one of our English minsters. Bodmin (where, nevertheless, the bishopric was for some time) is a mere parish church, and a poor one; Great St Columb is finer, but still not half so good as many a Northamptonshire church. But St Germans sets you thinking of Exeter and Bayeux and Southwell—at least its west front does. "Late Norman," say the books; and it certainly makes you feel what grand builders as well as fighters these Normans were. I won't draw unfair comparisons, and say that, as the little churches at Perranzabulo and Gwithian, which the shifting of the sand has lately disintombed, are to stately St Germans, so was the old Cornubritish to the Anglo-Norman hierarchy. I won't believe that; for they must have been grand heroes those old Irish saints, who came over very probably in no safer

craft than skin-covered corracas, and taught and preached, and were martyred by the dozen by that wicked King Theodore (Tudor), whose castle the sands near St Ives have righteously covered out of sight. Far finer men they were than Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, for instance, who wielded a mace at Hastings, because, though a Churchman must not shed blood, he was determined to do something to help his half-brother William. Far better Christians—true Christians, indeed, which Odo and many other Anglo-Norman prelates were not—but still not so good at building. They have left crosses with shafts carved in interlaced *opus Scoticum*; and holy wells, where silly girls still drop pins as they whisper their wishes, and round some of which people are still found to hang, on the sly, those bits of rag which served in Britain of old, as they now serve in Japan, instead of more costly offerings. They reared also little oratories (mostly pulled down, but still traceable, not only at Perran and Gwithian aforesaid, but at St Levan by Land's End, on the neck of the Gurnard's Head, &c.), which were for centuries the only stone buildings in the county;—but churches such as St Germans they could not build. See it, if you can. You can't see it from the railway. It nestles close to Port Eliot—Port-prior it was called in days before the Eliots had come down so far west. Some five-and-twenty years ago the lawn of the big house was still its churchyard. There, amid memories of Cragges and Eliots and Cornwallises (for they all combine to make an Earl of St Germans), you will think on Henry of Mortain, first Duke of Cornwall, and on those who built this west front, perhaps in the hope (only lately realised) that Cornwall might by-and-by be again cut off from Exeter, and made into a

bishopric as before. Why didn't they go further west instead of fixing their big church so near the border of the county? No doubt because the west was too wild for them, as it had been for the English bishops who came in after Athelstan's conquest. Just as the monks of Llanthony Abbey left the real Llanthony, on the Honndy (Avon dhu, black river)—the Llanthony where Father Ignatius has set up his modern monkery—and moved down to Gloucester out of the way of the barbarous Welsh, so the English bishops of Cornwall seem to have liked the eastern end of the county, where the population was, to a considerable extent, leavened with English. Wales is probably a good deal bigger than the political boundaries of the principality. It has streamed across to Bristol; it takes in half of Herefordshire—"you're true Welsh if you're born west of Offa's dike;" all Monmouthshire is very Welsh. But with Cornwall the case is different. There a string of names—Pillaton, Callington, Camelford, Wadebridge, along with a heap of Stows and Stokes—shows that the English pushed on far west of Tamar. And the names and the speech of the folk in East Cornwall are not Cornish but Devon. Hence the English bishops were glad to leave Bodmin for St Germans; and by-and-by the sees of St Germans and Crediton were merged in one, of which Exeter was made the cathedral town. At St Germans, at any rate, Mortain's Normans had not for patron one of these wild Irish or Welsh or Breton saints, more like mere hermits than civilised saints, but a bishop—Germanus of Auxerre—known all over

Christendom (you remember one of his churches, close by the Louvre?),—a foe, too, to the Welsh enemy; for was not his mission to controvert Pelagianism, that heretical disbelief in original sin to which these Welsh and Irish were so addicted? and did he not preach to good purpose, with his relic-bag slung round his neck, at St Albans, proving Pelagius his doctrine to be against both Moses and the prophets? Germanus, too, had been a duke, a real army-leader, and showed his right to his old title by winning for the Britons the Hallelujah victory; wherefore the English would naturally look up to him who had defeated them rather than to those who had suffered martyrdom at their hands. And so, doubtless, the Normans, out of respect for what had been, and possibly with a view to a cathedral by-and-by,* reared here their only notable church work in Cornwall.

West fronts, however, such as this at St Germans, you may see elsewhere; glass like that at St Neot's is much rarer. But how are you to get to St Neot's? I suppose you could walk across from St Germans and see Quethiock, whose great tithes were given by Bishop Grandison to support Sir John l'Erckedekne's chantry and archpriest, and other interesting churches on your way. Your best road, however, supposing you to be at Exeter or Plymouth, would be across Dartmoor to Tavistock, by one of the most picturesque railways in Europe. From Tavistock a coach starts to Callington and Liskeard, which will put you down near the little town of St Cleer, the tower of which you will have watched for

* St Germans is in the list of Henry VIII.'s suffragan sees. The Eliots, who came there in Elizabeth's reign, got it made (like so many other little Cornish towns) a Parliamentary borough. Browne Willis, in his *Notitia Parliamentorum*, sarcastically says: its two M.P.'s first came in 5th Elizabeth (1562). When they were about to take their seats, *their having representatives was questioned*.

hours crowning the southernmost spur of the Brown Willy range. At St Cleer be sure to see the tomb of Sir John Beer, who left a dole to the poor, but only to those who could say off by heart the very Protestant confession of faith which is inscribed on his monument. See, too, the old well, sadly ruinous. Dupath well, near Callington, is almost the only well that is still had in anything like due reverence. From St Cleer there are four long Cornish miles to St Neot's, up and down, down and up, the higher part of those valleys over which further south the viaducts run. Still you will have compensation for your fatigue or that of your horse. The valleys are gloriously wooded (the wood here can seldom, thanks to the sea-winds, grow on the hill-tops), and even when bare they are never, as they are round Saltash, made vile with little patches of market-garden and glass frames, and cottages that pretend to be ornate. It is nature, and nature at her best. Choose the spring-time if you can, and you'll confess that a few parishes in East Cornwall could stock the whole island with primroses; and that no garden lentilies were ever so graceful as the wild single ones which grow in the valley of the upper Fowey. Then there is something for the archaeologist. *Other half stone* (you can hardly miss it) is the shaft of a huge cross with interlaced cable-work. Close by stands the socket only of another cross which bears a name that has been read as Doniert. Here, they say, was buried Dungarth (Camden identifies him with the said Doniert), son of Caradoc, king of Cornwall. That he was drowned, A.D. 872, tradition tells us. But where? There is no water to drown a man nearer than Dosemery Pool, that hollow in the

granite which was supposed, like some Derbyshire wells, to ebb and flow with the tide, and which that poor hunted spirit Tregagle was set every now and then to empty with a pierced limpet-shell. However, there was a persistent belief that under the cross was a sepulchral vault; and so at last the ground was opened, and, sure enough, a square stone-chamber was found, but no bones or remains of any kind.

A few more ups and downs will bring you to St Neot's, whence (as I said) it is three miles to Doublebois through Treverbyn grounds (go there in rhododendron time) and past the house, the chief rooms of which are panelled with Bermuda cedar, and roofed with the teak of a famous East Indiaman,—a lovely walk, as the name of the station might lead you to think. Thence you can go on to Penzance; or if from St Neot's you care to see the Bodmin moors, and Tintagel, and all that side, you may leave out Doublebois and join the railway lower down. In coming back stop at Plymouth or at Saltash, and go up the Tamar to Tavistock by steamer, taking care to stop at Cothele (a real Cornish name—they are rare hereabouts,—*coet*, *heyle*—wood, river-mouth). This old place of the Edgcumbes is better worth seeing than Haddon or Penshurst. It is "kept up" (the dowager countess lives there); the old tapestry still hangs in all the rooms; the richly carved bedsteads have their old needlework curtains; the chapel is still used on Sunday afternoons; the "parlour" is still the tenants' punch-room; and in the fine old hall hang coats of mail and two-handed swords, and arquebuses and Irish horns" (a peculiar brazen instrument of which only four are said to be extant). Cothele is as thoroughly old-world English as

Chenonceaux and Azay-le-Rideau are Renaissance French.

You see I have recommended you to come west by narrow gauge, or rather to divide, taking your narrow-gauge tourist's ticket as far as Tavistock so as to see Dartmoor, and then getting on to Penzance and back by ordinary Great Western. By-and-by all our railways will be amalgamated, because Government will have bought them. It will be felt that the iron-way is the Queen's highway; and that to worry her Majesty's lieges with an elaborate calculation how best and cheapest they may make one line dovetail in with another is not to be endured. However, your ticket will frank you a good part of the way; for the Liskeard coach and several other of the coaches run in connection with the narrow gauge. And then you will have seen St Neot's, and therein probably the quaintest glass you ever saw—sixteen windows; about half of the glass in which is really old, the rest not at all a bad imitation.

It is a fine church, too, with its (for Cornwall) unusual amount of ornament; pinnacles at the buttresses all along the nave. Very hard it must have been to work the crockets in that most intractable of materials, the moorstone (granite). The trees around are fine for Cornwall. The village as sleepy as a village can be. How different from the old pilgrimage days, when (though they had stolen all St Neot's body except one arm, and carried it off to the other St Neot's in Huntingdon) year after year thousands came to bathe in the well (now padlocked up), and to pray beside the remaining limb of the Wessexman who had chosen British ground for his retreat!

There is a good deal in the circumstances and health-conditions under which you see any bit of

antiquity. Of all the glass I ever saw, I remember best that at Carantan, not very far from Granville in Normandy, a strange old-fashioned town with stone arcades in front of some of the houses, a bigger edition of the Dartmouth "butter-walk." And yet I saw it in haste, between a change of diligences, and there was no one to explain. To this day I don't know whether the naked figures in tubs were being baptised, or martyred by boiling alive. But I know the glass was very beautiful, though the red in France is apt to be too pervading for English tastes. At St Neot's we had an interpreter, a quaint old man, who had the whole story at his fingers' end, but who, if you stopped him (as, maliciously, we often did), literally could not go on till he had harked back to the last break in his legend. The first window at the west end of the north aisle is St George's, which when you have seen you will have a far more exalted idea than before of that questionable personage, who somehow got to be the patron saint of England. Dragon-slaying is child's-play compared with having your head cut off by the Gauls and set on again by the help of the Blessed Virgin, who also, in another compartment, clothes the young saint in dragon-proof armour. Man's ingratitude, however, has a tooth proverbially sharper than a dragon's. In the ordinary version, the young hero, for his reward, gets the king's or soldan's daughter to wife. Don't you remember the picture in which she and her father, plunged waist-high in two towers not much bigger than themselves, are looking pityingly at him as he rides down the bone-strewed road to the Dragon's den? But in the window it is not so. Here, immediately after his victory, he is tortured in various ways. The king's son bestrides

him, and with whip and spur makes him gallop round the palace-yard; two truculent fellows with iron rakes tear the flesh off his chest; a villain, dressed, strange to say, like a monk, blows the fire over which the oil for his torturing is being boiled. At last the king cuts his head off, and from this beheading there is no revival.

The next window, given in 1528, by the young men of the parish, describes the life of St Neot, uncle of King Alfred, or (as others say) a poor shepherd lad. He was a hermit: and that he might never lack food, an angel put three fish into his well, of which he was never to eat more than one, and the number was always miraculously completed. But the holy man fell sick, and his servant (our old guide took care to tell us his name was Barius), wishing to tempt his master's appetite with a choice of dishes, cooked two fish, broiling one, boiling the other. The saint, horrified, bade him at once throw them both back into the water, and the moment they touched it they came to life again. And there you see them, in the round-rimmed well, out of which the water streams through a lion's-head spout, swimming as lively as gold-fish in a glass globe. Other wonders, wrought by St Neot, are recorded lower down. He is ploughing with stags, because his oxen have been stolen; and the next picture shows the thief, struck with awe at such a prodigy as stags ploughing, bringing back the plunder. That figure with a book in his hand, and his feet in a stone-rimmed washing-tub, is the saint at his well. Every morning he used to sit there, with his feet in the cold water, while he read through the daily *Psalms*. The next window, *scororum* (of the young women), bears date 1529, and contains four figures, among them St Patrick in

a green chasuble, and St Brechan robed in ermine, as befits a king's son, and having in his lap three heads—those of his children. Next to that is the wives' window, 1520, and then that which was put in "at the gift and cost of Rudolph Harys, and by his work." Among the figures in the Calway window (1577) is St Stephen, carrying a little pile of stones in a napkin, and also a St Calway, "invented," said our guide, "by the donor, for the name is in no calendar." At the east end of the north aisle are some verses about St Neot, which do not do credit to the local poet:—

Consuming time Neot's flesh and bones
to dust translated;
A sacred tomb this dust enclosed which
now is ruined.

The Creation window, in the south aisle, is far the quaintest of all. Some of the lights represent Christ, compasses in hand, planning the Creation; the division of water from land; the making of man—a skeleton getting gradually fleshed over; Eve rising out of Adam's body; the temptation—the tempter being a huge green serpent with lovely woman's face (Lilith, to wit); Cain standing by his offering, while Abel reverently kneels; Cain killing his brother with a jaw-bone; blind Lamech, his hand guided by a boy, shooting Cain (a good Talmudist was this glass-painter); Adam dying, and Seth putting into his nostrils the pips of the forbidden apple, out of which pips grew the wood of which the ark, and also the cross, was made. The next window continues the subject with the life of Noah—from the time when he was taught how to build the ark to his exposure by Ham. A tell-tale bottle lies at the corner of the picture.

Other windows are less interest-

ing. One given by Christopher and Catharine Burlas (Borlase, the family of the antiquary Dr Borlase of Penden, vicar of St Just and Ludgvan, correspondent of Pope), and John Vyvyan her father, contains of course St Christopher and St Catherine; and also St Leonard, and St Neot when he was a young monk at Glastonbury. Underneath kneel the Burlases in red, and their four sons in green, and also their eight daughters in blue with white coifs. The armorial window near this is wholly new. All the different armorial bearings with their remembrance had perished, save one coat of arms of an unknown family in an upper tracery light. The window has therefore been devoted to the arms of Grylls (with his porcupine crest) and a few allied families. What has become of the one unbroken but undetermined coat of arms I could not find.* Ignotus has given place to Grylls. Grylls, however, merits the honour. At a time when church restoration had not begun, he restored these very remarkable windows, incuria et vetustate collapsas (says the inscription at the base of his armorial window) per annos 1826-29, e re privata restauravit redintegravit ornavit Ricardus Gerveys Grylls Helstoniensis, olim ab 1792 ad 1820, hujus parochiæ vicarius et adhuc patronus; filio suo vicario; operis præfecto Johanne Hedgeland picture. If you can get hold of a rare book—Hedgeland's 'Description, accompanied by 16 Coloured Plates, of the Splendid Decorations recently made to St Neot's Church, Cornwall: London, 1830,' you will have some notion of what the windows are; while Mr Davies Gilbert's prefatory remarks will enable you to form an idea of what

state they were in fifty-three years ago. The work of restoration seems to have been lovingly and carefully done. They had been grievously mutilated, large portions of some of them having been wholly destroyed, and replaced with plain glass. Throughout, the old glass was preserved as much as possible; and where the original design of a compartment was wholly lost, it was supplied strictly in the same style as the rest of the work. I have said that the dates are given on two or three of the windows; but the oldest, the Creation and Noah windows, are evidently much earlier than the sixteenth century. The Rev. Cornelius Gorham (of the "Controversy"), who, when he was fellow of his college, wrote an exhaustive history of the two places which are named from the royal saint, assigns to those two windows the date 1480. I believe they are earlier; though Mr Whitaker's date, 1199, is as amusingly absurd as the whole of his book on the subject, which book, along with his 'Cathedral of Cornwall,' may be taken as a warning to archaeologists. Nothing more wild and confused and illogical was ever written even about the Irish Round Towers. Whitaker, however, deserves credit for having called attention to St Neot's and its windows; but for his having done so, the whole of the windows might have been reduced to plain glass before Mr Grylls thought of taking them in hand. The Reformation does not seem to have done much mischief to Christian art in the district; but it is a wonder all this glass escaped the fury of the Civil Wars, during which the neighbouring well of St Cleer was dismantled, and even logan (or logging) stones were displaced.

* Gorham gives it: "quarterly,—first and fourth *gules*, 3 lions passant-gardant or; second and third *sable*, 6 mullets (stars) *argent*, 3 2 1."

Fortunately the Creation window, the richest, had suffered least injury. Mr Gorham is quite enthusiastic about the richness of its colour, and the quaint Talmudic and other legends illustrated in some of its compartments.

There are several lives of St Neot, one included by Capgrave (temp. Henry VI.) in his 'Golden Legend of English Saints,' telling how rex quidam fuit occidentaliū Anglorum ac Cancie nomine Edulphus, egregie magis liberalitati studens quam mundane seruiens cupiditati. Neot was his eldest son, given him by the Lord, who, "cum sit excelsus, humiles respicit." Young Neot was perfect in mind and body, omnibus amabilis, aspectu angelicus, sed corporis breuitate alter Zacchæus. You will hear in the village about the iron stool on which he perched himself to say mass, and how he used to stand on a stone in the churchyard (they will show you the very stone) and throw the key at the church-door, always succeeding in thus fixing it in the lock, which straightway opened of itself. This legend has come from Glastonbury, where Neot was once sacristan. Some great man (quidam potens) was knocking loudly, and the saint was anxious to open; but, alas! the lock was too high for such a little man (eighteen inches are all that tradition allows him) to reach. What was to be done? Why, the lock, divina virtute, came down within reach, usque ad succinctorium.

Preferring a hermit's life to the glitter of courts, he came to Hamstoke, near Bodmin, where St Guerir, the healer, had lived. Asser, by the way, mentions that King Alfred, after trying many holy places to get rid of the painful malady which afflicted him, at last found relief at St Guerir. Now one legend makes Neot Alfred's elder

brother; anyhow, he seems to have belonged to the royal house of Wessex, and to have been Alfred's near kinsman. Hence it may be that he directed the wise king to the well of his predecessor in this remote hermitage.

Capgrave of course tells how the saint (like Capgrave's saints in general) visited Rome, and was honourably received by Pope Martin. He tells, also, all about Barius and the fishes; and the ploughing with stags (adding, hoc nec asserere contendo, nec de Dei potentia diffidens abnegare presumo); and also about the sitting in his well while he repeated, not the daily Psalms, but *the whole* of the Psalter. He also says that St Neot tanto securius quanto propinquius de sanguine ejus tractus, sharply rebuked Alfred for his tyranny, his pride, and the hardships of his government, urging him to send gifts to Pope Martin and pray that he might be allowed to establish an English school at Rome. Alfred did so, and received from Martin the comforting present of a piece (non modicam portionem) of the true cross.

Soon after the saint died, literally in the odour of sanctity: tantam enim tamque delectabilem longe lateque totam aeris temperiem odoris reddidit fragrantia ut aduenientes ac remoti se subito fatebantur renouari dulcedine et egroti quique sanari. The earth of his burial-place became a medieval Morrison's pill—pro quolibet inualitudinis genere tam homines quam jumenta conualescere faciebat.

He had not yet done with Alfred, to whom he appeared during his distress at Athelney, promising him victory, by the same token that these troubles had come on him through the pride and tyranny for which he had previously taken him to task. While the battle against Guthrum was raging, Alfred beheld

St Neot inimicos conterentem et ineptos reddentem, and pointed him out to his soldiers, addressing them (says Capgrave) as commilitones mei bellatores incliti.

Neot had founded and endowed a college of priests at Hamstoke, which had come to be called Neot-stoke; but, like many other endowments, it was seized by the Normans. Mortain, Earl or Duke, left only a single acre for the support of the priest. Even tradition has forgotten where the college stood. There are, by the way, some vestiges of a chapel of St Luke—possibly connected with the idea of the healer (*Guerir*); but in Cornish parishes there was almost always one consecrated place (if not more) in addition to the parish church. The Cornishmen were as fond in old times as they now are of having their religion brought close to their doors; and the Methodists of different kinds have wisely taken advantage of this. The old chapels have disappeared. When the clergy took to marrying, and the colleges of priests were suppressed, it was impossible for all these old chapelries to be duly served; but there is scarcely a hamlet without its little Bethel (often a very little one) of Bible Christians, or Free Church, or Wesleyans; sometimes a struggle for existence is maintained between all three.

About the unedifying story of saint-stealing, Capgrave is discreetly reticent. He says that the *custos-famulus* had a vision in which his master, in monkish hexameters, bade him carry his body away, nothing doubting:—

Hinc me transfer, abi custos, nolito
morari;
Elegi loculum Christus quem jussit hab-
endum.

The Neot-stoke men pursue; and having at last overtaken him:

Vimque inferre parant et sc̃m tollere
tentant.

Then follows the usual story. The saint won't move. The founder of the new monastery at St Ernulpsbury (Eynesbury) invites the Cornishmen to carry their property away. They try in vain: *sc̃uiunt, turbantur, et fremunt*. At last, on the sour grapes principle, they cry: "Well, after all, you only have his bones; we have the place where he lived and died: *vos terram factam, nos spiritus virtutem egregiam; vos mortem, nos vero vitam*."

The facts are, that about 974 Earl Alric of Huntingdon founded Eynesbury Abbey, under the patronage of Brithnoth, first Abbot of Ely, and Ethelwold, Bishop of Winchester; and casting about for a patron saint, fixed (no one can tell why) on St Neot. The *custos-famulus*, bribed, we may suppose, stole the body on St Andrew's Day, and, within the octave, safely reached Eynesbury. King Edgar, who had sanctioned the theft, sent an armed band to drive back the pursuing Cornishmen and put them to the sword if necessary; and it was explained that the Neot-stoke men were unworthy, for their manifold sins, to possess so great a treasure.

Relic-stealing seems to have been a sin to which Cornish *custodes* were prone. In 1177, statim post Epiphanium Dñi, one of the canons of Bodmin secretly took away the body of St Petroc, fleeing with it beyond sea to the Abbey of St Mevennus, in partibus minoris Britanniae. Happier than the men of Neot-stoke, the prior and canons of Bodmin got Henry Fitzempress to command Roland de Dinant, justiciary of Brittany, to cause the body to be restored. St Mevennus is the Cornish St Mewan, who gives his name to the parish containing that biggest of all mines, Great Polgooth. Indeed the two Britains have

many saints in common. Breock and Brieuc, for instance; Gunwalloc by the Lizard and Winwalloc in Finisterre, each with a Llandewednac church of St Vennochus or Winoc near it; Budoc, near Falmouth, named from a bishop of Dol, &c. St Mevennus's monks had to give up St Petroc's body, and it was got safely back to Bodmin on the 13th day before the kalends of July, being the feast of S. Gervasius and Prothasius.

Divers relic-stealings among the English are also recorded by Mr Gorham. Thus, in 974, the monks of Ely coveted the body of St Wittburga, sister of St Etheldreda, patroness of the isle of Ely. Brithnoth and Ethelwold were at the bottom of this scheme too, and they also got the consent of Edgar; but as the men of Dereham, where the body was, were likely to resist, they proceeded with caution. The abbot with a well-armed band paid Dereham a visit, and got up a grand feast to draw off the attention of the townsfolk. Then, in the dead of the night, his monks carried the saint off to their boats, which were lying at Brandon-on-Ouse. The Dereham men pursued, but having no boats they could do nothing but threaten. The story is given at length by Thomas of Ely in the Bodleian MS. life of St Neot.

Again, Ætheric, Bishop of Dorchester, got leave from Canute to remove the bones of St Felix, Bishop of East Angles, from Soham to Ramsey. On their way back the Ramsey monks were intercepted by a strong party from Ely, and there would have been a river fight had not a thick fog come on, under cover of which the robbers got safely away.

Even the original name of the second St Neot's is connected with one of these pious body-snatchings; at least if the Jesuit Alford was

right in identifying Ernulphus with a bishop of Metz who became a hermit, and being buried on the Moselle was afterwards "translated" to the neighbourhood of Bedford.

There is plenty more to say about St Neot, whose lineage is almost as great a mystery as that of Melchisedec. His father is called king of the East Angles in the Bodleian MS. life; king of the West Angles and of Kent in the Cottonian MS. life and the MS. of John Capgrave of Tinmouth aforesaid; and tetrarch of Kent in the MS. life in the library of Magdalen College, Oxford.

And name, as well as title, varies not in these MSS. only, but in the MS. Anglo-Saxon life, in the life written at the Abbey of Bec and published in the 'Acta Sanctorum,' and in other versions. The various names, however, are all forms of Ethelwulph; and the father has therefore been identified with Alfred's father, and, since Neot is not given in the list of his sons, Whitaker the imaginative supposes him to have been Athelstane, Ethelwulph's first-born (by a different wife from the mother of the rest). This Athelstane gained a great victory over the Danes at Sandwich in 851, and then disappears from history: William of Malmesbury says he cannot tell what became of him. Here was Whitaker's opportunity. What more natural than that Athelstane, "disgusted with the sanguinary scenes which he had witnessed at Sandwich, should have determined to renounce the world; . . . and, to make his relinquishment final, should have changed his name for that of NEORTOS (the little one), at once descriptive of his small stature and his spiritual lowliness"? To this it is enough to reply, with Mr Gorham, that had the prince of Kent, heir of the throne of Wessex, become a monk of Glastonbury, he could not have been hid. Capgrave

and the MS. quoted by Leland are the earliest authorities in which anything is said about his being a king's son.

Even at Eynesbury the stolen bones did not find rest. Very soon (in 1003) they were taken, for fear of the Danes, by a rich and pious lady, Lewina, to her villa at Whittelesa, and thence to Croyland, of which her brother, Osketel, was abbot. Ingulphus gives a lively picture of the procession which, with sacred chants, carried the "sacred mould of the Confessor Neot" through the almost impassable marshes. When danger from the Danes was over they were restored; but the Croyland monks kept some portion of them, which enabled them to boast that the holy remains were still in their possession.

He who wishes to know more about the saint must read the books—Whitaker, Hedgeland, Gorham—to which I have referred. Let him not fail to notice in Gorham (p. 161) a curious instance of antiquarian blundering.

On a fragment of a wall-tablet in one of the chapels of the later St Neot's are a crown and a shield and the words OR : THE : SOV. Tradition referred the tablet to the saint, and Whitaker was equal to the occasion. "The crown denoted the saint's royal birth, and the R ought to have been a B; whence, by the easy change of O into A, we have OB THE SAVrum in Cælo.

Coronam tradidit fratri juniori—an act commemorated in one of the compartments of the St Neot window." This reminds me of an inscription on the free school in a midland town. It ran NO : DOMI : NI. The school had been rebuilt a few years before, and the mason had copied, with Chinese fidelity, the remnant of a partly defaced inscription, not see-

ing that it must have run anNO : DOMINI. The second pair of stops he had (un-Chinese in this) put in to balance the first.

Mr Gorham is of course right in reading Whitaker's legend as, Of : your : Charite : pray : for : THE : SOVI : of : . . .

But enough of the historians of St Neot; the thing is, not to visit Cornwall without contriving to see his church.

The doggerel from which I have already quoted two lines, connects him with Oxford:—

His father was a Saxon king, St Dunstan was his teacher.
In famous Oxford he was eke the first
professed preacher
That there in schools, by quaintest terms,
the sacred themes expounded.

Anyhow, his window will remind you of St Frideswide's modern window in Christ Church Cathedral; while the Creation and Noah windows are far better than anything old or modern that Oxford has to show.

And, take my advice; before you go into Cornwall read Davies Gilbert's 'Parochial History.' It gives all sorts of quaint bits out of old Hals and Tonkin; and, moreover, Gilbert himself is full of odds and ends of information. Take, for instance, Hals about Sir Thomas Eliot, twice sheriff of Cambridgeshire under Henry VIII., who wrote *defensorium bonarum mulierum*, and also, "to the disgrace of the critics and clergy that get their livings by the liberal arts and sciences, he being only a layman, made the first Latin and English dictionary, upon which stock Bishop Cowper and others grafted all that are now extant." About the early escapade of Sir John Eliot, the patriotic opponent of Noy, also a Cornishman (there are Noys still in the parishes about Land's End), Gilbert quotes D'Israeli's 'Commentaries on the

Reign of Charles I.,' vol. iv. p. 512. Young Sir John was a spendthrift, and Moyle of Bake, a neighbour, told his father of his ways. Whereupon Eliot went to his house, drew upon him, and wounded him in the side.

Read also, if you can get it, 'The Age of the Saints,' a monograph on early Cornish Christianity,

by W. Copeland Borlase, President of the Royal Institution of Cornwall, author of 'Nænia Cornubiæ,' &c.* It will clear your views, if you have any, about the early British Church, and will show you that St Alban and his successors had far less to do than St Patrick's disciples with the conversion of the men of West Wales.

HALF-HEARTED.

If I could love thee, Love, a little more,
 If thy fair love outlived the brief sweet rose—
 If in my golden field were all thy store,
 And all my joy within thy garden close,—
 Then would I pray my heart to be full fond
 For ever, and a little bit beyond.

If daffodil and primrose were not frail,
 If snowdrop died not ere the dying day—
 If I were true as Daphnis in the tale,
 If thou couldst love as Juliet in the play,—
 Then would I teach my heart to be full fond
 For ever, and a little bit beyond.

But since I fear I am but wayward true,
 And wayward false, fair love, thou seem'st to be—
 Since I some day must sigh for something new,
 And each day thou for life's monotony,—
 Prithee, stay here ere yet we grow too fond,
 And let me pass a little bit beyond.

J. S.

* He has lately opened, on a cliff in St Just, perhaps the finest tumulus in all England.

INDIA AND THE SILVER QUESTION.

NEVER before has the Indian Budget attracted so large and keenly interested an assembly of the House of Commons as that which met this year on the 23d of May. For the first time on any such occasion a parliamentary battle had been fully prepared for; and the Opposition whip had issued a circular summoning the Liberal members for an "important division" which, it was announced, would take place after two nights spent in debate. This was a very striking departure from the ordinary listlessness and indifference of the House upon Indian subjects,—which, as was long ago said, empty the benches "like the sound of the dinner-bell." Yet, long before Mr Stanhope had finished his statement on behalf of the Government, all idea of a party fight vanished; and Mr Fawcett, upon whose motion the battle was to have been waged, rose at once to withdraw his motion, and to express entire concurrence with the views of the Government. Mr Fawcett has long devoted great attention to Indian matters, and, frequent and stringent as have been his criticisms of Ministerial policy towards India, it must be said to his credit that he has been thoroughly impartial and independent,—that his criticisms, although not always right, have been wholly free from party bias—and that his sole object has been to promote the welfare of our Indian empire, and uphold its interests which are too apt to be sacrificed to those of our own people. We may add that, keenest and most absolute of free-traders though he be, Mr Fawcett has been foremost and almost alone in condemning the recent abolition of the small

customs-duty levied upon British cotton goods by the Indian Government,—justly maintaining that this abolition was a "sop to Lancashire," and a most unfair abridgment of the scant revenue of our Indian empire.

The explicit approval thus given by Mr Fawcett to the Ministerial statement reduced the subsequent debate to a merely formal discussion. When the debate was resumed three weeks afterwards (June 13th), the emptiness of the House called from Mr Smollett the caustic remark that "when there was an intention to make Indian affairs the subject of a party contest, they excited no small interest; but the moment that intention was abandoned, apathy and neglect prevailed." In this second debate Mr Gladstone descanted eloquently upon the perilous condition of a Government which cannot produce good budgets; and Mr Bright became indignant over our alleged neglect of the interests of the native population. But absolutely the only suggestion made by these distinguished politicians in solution of the present difficulties was "Retrenchment,"—without any consideration of the effect which such a course must have upon the present industrial interests and future financial resources of our Indian empire. While great retrenchments were insisted upon in the army, not a word was said as to the fact that the military expenditure of the Indian Government had been largely increased by the legislation of the British Parliament, through the army amalgamation and the consequent introduction of the short period of enlistment into the Indian service. In like manner,

retrenchment was vehemently demanded in the expenditure upon public works, as if this were a matter of Government extravagance, instead of the only means by which the Indian Government can promote production and facilitate trade and the increase of wealth throughout that vast and imperfectly developed empire. Still less was any reference made to the remarkable changes and period of prosperity through which India passed subsequently to 1855, occasioned by the vast expenditure upon railways and other public works, together with the extraordinary increase of the foreign trade of that country and the concomitant influx of the precious metals. A statesmanlike review of the recent period of Indian prosperity, and of the causes by which it was brought to a close, is indispensable to a correct appreciation of the present condition of affairs; yet not a word was said upon these matters during the recent debates.

This was the more remarkable, and also the more regrettable, because of late there has been something like a panic with respect to the finances and general condition of our Indian empire. Elaborate articles have been published, proclaiming "the bankruptcy of India:" a statement which, as we shall see, would be a very exaggerated one under any circumstances. But it seems to be forgotten that India has been suffering from a commercial depression similar to that which we all find it hard to bear at home. Were we to regard the present depression as likely to endure,—if the future of this country were to be a continuance of declining trade, diminished manufacturing production, and widespread agricultural distress,—we might well quake for fear, not merely for our State fin-

ance, but for the very existence of our population. On the other hand, let India revive, resuming her normal commercial progress, and the difficulties besetting her finances will vanish—assuredly they will be entirely stripped of their formidable character.

But take the case as it stands. The causes of the deficits in the Indian Exchequer are very peculiar. In combination—indeed we might almost say, individually—they are unknown to any other Government in the world. These causes are, Famines and productive Public Works—causes as different in their character as it is possible to imagine—and thirdly, a sudden change in the value of the Indian currency compared with the currencies of this and other countries of the Western world. This last cause of the financial embarrassment is so singular and entirely without a precedent in history, that we shall devote special attention to it in the sequel: but at this point we must desire the reader to bear in mind that, exceedingly great as is the drain on the Indian Exchequer for famines and public works, nevertheless there would be no deficit at all at present but for the immense "loss on exchange" produced by this remarkable alteration in the relative value of the two precious metals in India.

Within the last few years, the public of this country have become well acquainted with the terrible severity of Indian famines,—where the deaths from starvation are counted by millions, despite the unstinted exertions and disbursements of the Government. The disastrous effects of these famines in impoverishing the districts afflicted by them are really immeasurable; and the losses which they inflict upon the Government are strikingly shown by the statement of Mr Stau-

hope that, in connection with the recent famine alone, in the Madras Presidency, "the total disbursements of the Government were not less than £13,000,000,"—a larger sum than the terrible Irish famine of 1847 entailed upon our Government. Moreover, it has become recognised that these climatic disasters are, in the present state of India, inevitably of periodical recurrence; so much so, that it is estimated that a million and a half per annum, accumulating for this purpose, is not too much for the Government to lay by against their recurrence. At the same time it is to be noted that, even in the worst years, there is always food enough in India to support the population; and that the disastrous effects of these famines will be greatly obviated by the construction of railways and roads; while the famines themselves would be reduced to very small proportions if there were an adequate supply of irrigation works, such as the Indian Government hopes by-and-by to be able to provide.

It is sad to think that at the very time when the serious effect of these famines has become fully appreciated, it should be thought necessary to abandon the measures by which alone they can be prevented. Most reluctantly by the Indian Government, but with a light heart by the House of Commons, the fiat has gone forth to stop the construction of a large part of the productive public works. The serious extent to which the expenditure upon these public works deranges the Indian budgets, is shown by the fact, stated by Mr Stanhope, that "during the last five years, if these productive public works be put out of the accounts, the deficit has only been three millions,—albeit during the same period the Government has had to provide no less than twelve mil-

lions on account of famine-relief, and seven and a quarter millions for loss on exchange." As Mr Stanhope added, "this is not a very unsatisfactory statement." A Government cannot be very badly off when it can meet an extraordinary expenditure of nearly twenty millions, and come short of a balance by only a sixth part of that sum,—and this, too, when India has been suffering during these years from a stagnation of trade. Indeed, taking famines, public works, loss on exchange, and the Affghan war-expenditure all together, the Indian deficit for the current year is only three and a quarter millions—or a million and a half less than the sum expended upon productive public works.

But why, it is said, should the Indian finances be deranged by an expenditure on public works which, however reproductive, is a voluntary disbursement? Upon this point there is at present a great change in the weather-cock of public opinion. Until some twenty years ago, it was a standing saying and reproach that "if the English were turned out of India they would leave nothing behind to show that they were a civilised Power." Since Lord Dalhousie's administration, State works on a large scale, and of a most beneficent character, have been vigorously prosecuted. Railways, roads, and canals have been constructed year after year, with even greater advantages to the population than to the Government itself. So desirable is this policy, that not long ago Mr Bright, with his usual earnestness, advocated an expenditure of thirty millions upon canals alone,—this large sum, of course, having to be borrowed by the Indian Government.

The contraction of loans for the construction of useful works is no more a sign of insolvency, or even of

poverty, than is the constant borrowing on the part of the Metropolitan Board of Works, or of Birmingham, or any other municipality which engages in reproductive outlay. In truth, these productive public works—for we are not speaking of the unproductive works, such as jails and barracks—while benefiting the people from the very outset, will ere long become a most valuable property of the Government, from which a large stream of revenue will annually flow into the Indian Exchequer. No doubt this expenditure is very embarrassing at the present time. An individual may invest his whole income in reproductive enterprises—say in the building of factories or sinking of coal-pits—and thereby secure great advantages in the end: but the question is, What is to become of him in the meantime? Is he to starve, or become bankrupt?—and will his creditors be content to wait for their money until these enterprises begin to pay? This is the strongest argument for a stoppage of the Indian public works. Yet such a course is in itself greatly to be deplored. These works are doing an incalculable amount of good,—without them the desolating and costly famines are inevitable,—ere long, too, they will lighten taxation by yielding a large revenue to the Indian Treasury,—and, during their construction, they give employment to a large portion of the poor Indian peasantry. At the cost of £50,000 per annum the Indian community gets a million sterling expended on useful works, which ere long repay the expenditure upon them. A curtailment of these works is peculiarly unfortunate at the present time, when commercial and industrial depression so widely prevails in India. Mr Fawcett admits that suffering is already being created by the stoppage of public works—that “thou-

sands of poor labourers have been dismissed.” It is also the fact that the malcontents in the Poonah district include the stoppage of this Government expenditure in the memorial of their grievances addressed to the Governor of the Bombay Presidency.

This curtailment of the usual expenditure on productive public works is the great feature of the present Budget. Another feature is the cheapening of salaries to be effected by the admission of natives to all offices in the State except the very highest. Fewer Englishmen are to be trained and sent out to administer the affairs of India. If this proposal be regarded upon grounds of statesmanship, and of political wisdom, there is very much to be said in favour of it. But to make this great political change upon grounds of cheapness—for the sake of getting a supply of “cheap labour” for the administration of the empire—is to rob it of all its political value in the eyes of the native gentry and population. Thus stripped of its political value, the measure simply means the adoption of an inferior quality of labour, for the sake of cheapness, in the administration of the Government of India. Solely and entirely upon this ground has the important political change been proposed to and adopted by Parliament! It is hardly possible to conceive a greater degradation of statesmanship.

The House of Commons appears to be exceedingly relieved and gratified by the rough-and-ready remedies which the Government propose to apply to Indian finance. The House also appears to be jubilant at the idea that it has forced wisdom upon our Indian statesmen. We fear there is not much ground for the former of these pleasant impressions, and there is none at all for the latter. The best that can

be said for the measures now to be adopted is, that they are a deplorable necessity, — a sacrifice of the future to an immediately pressing emergency, and a remedy which even for the present creates a new evil. Doubtless it is a reduction of expenditure, but it is as questionable an economy as that of a workman who sells his tools in order to pay for his lodgings. The ill-founded self-complacency which at present prevails in the House of Commons, if not still more widely, — the belief that Home wisdom has shown its superiority to that of our Indian statesmen, — only recalls to mind with unusual emphasis the old prediction, that “if India is ever to be lost, it will be lost in the House of Commons.” Home interests and home opinion have done more than anything else to produce the financial embarrassments of India, which the House of Commons now regards as so intolerable. It was home opinion and influence which in 1836 led to the exclusion of gold and the establishment of a single silver-standard in India. It was home interests which in 1858 led to the abolition of the old Indian army, and its amalgamation with our own: the sole object of that measure being to enable England to keep up, at the expense of India, a large military reserve which we ourselves grudge to pay for. Again, the “short-service” system, which we have adopted for our own interests, has added greatly to the military expenses of India, of which the House of Commons so loudly complains. It is estimated that these military changes, made entirely for our own interests, have added three or four millions sterling a-year to the Indian expenditure.

Indeed it is to be feared that if the real motive for the deep concern which the House of Commons has suddenly begun to feel for the

Indian embarrassments be looked into, it will be largely resolvable into a vivid apprehension lest the British Exchequer be affected by the Indian one. We amalgamate the armies, but we should lose the profit of this amalgamation were we to amalgamate the Treasuries. India owes us some fourteen millions sterling a-year for the home charges: it would be a dreadful thing if this sum were not paid to us regularly and in full! Rather than possibly have to wait for a portion of this money, the House of Commons cry “Stop public works, however productive, and however needful at present to give employment to the poor peasantry; disband a part of the Indian army; open the upper ranks of the administration to the cheaper service of the natives. As for the change in the value of silver, that is too difficult a question for us,—only we must insist that, be the value of the rupee what it may in India, the Indian Government shall pay gold-money for all its debts to England.” How little disinterested we are is shown by the fact that, although admittedly India needs every shilling of revenue she can obtain, home influence, as a sop to Lancashire, now abolishes the small customs-duty upon our own cotton goods,—under a plea for free trade, which Mr Fawcett, the most ardent of free-traders, indignantly condemns. Not thus do we act towards our colonies, which are able and resolute to uphold their rights and interests. But we treat India as a dependency, not as a sister kingdom.

The Indian Government has sent home proposals for remedying the silver dilemma which so seriously afflicts it; these proposals have been referred to “a small committee,” and the result, as stated by Mr Stanhope, is that the Govern-

ment has felt compelled to reject these remedies, and is unable to suggest any others. The negotiations upon the subject are as yet undivulged; but Mr Stanhope's statement implies that nothing can be done but "to grin and bear it." "We must manfully face the loss," he says; and as the "we" means India, this is a very cheap display of fortitude. It does not require much resolution to face a loss which falls upon others. The dilemma, however, is of a most perplexing character; nor do we think that an effectual solution of it is attainable by the action of any single Government. If solved satisfactorily, this must be done by international agreement. Serious as the question has already become, the world will have to hear still more about it ere long; and it is especially needful that the British public should give thoughtful consideration to it. As regards what is possible, it is not an exaggeration to say that, by the folly of Governments, the many thousand millions of silver coins now usefully circulating in the world, by being demonetised, may ere long be selling in the market as ordinary metal at a shilling the ounce!

The year 1876 will remain memorable as that of the Silver Panic. The most confident of all the predictions made upon the discovery of the California and Australian gold-mines was that there would be a great and permanent rise in the value of silver compared with gold. Years passed without this prediction being realised; but suddenly, and when many people were still looking for a change of this kind, an event of the very opposite character occurred. In the course of a few months silver rapidly fell in market price, until, in the summer of 1876, it sank to only four-fifths of its old and normal value. Thinking men at once perceived what

serious consequences must result from this change; and both our own Parliament and the Congress of the United States hastened to appoint Select Committees to investigate the matter. The House of Commons Committee, however, —adopting a course now become too common — shirked the most important part of its duties, and simply reported, in summary, the evidence which had been submitted to it. The public at large took little interest in the matter. Our monetary system being based solely upon gold, any change in the value of silver was wholly unfelt in the ordinary trade and ongoings of life in this country. Next, a cry of distress began to come to us from our great Eastern empire; but the communications between the Indian Government and Downing Street remained unpublished, and it was only from rumour, rather than certain knowledge, that the disastrous effects of the Silver Question upon India came under the notice of the general public. But, early in the spring of the present year, the "City" was startled by the announcement, most frankly made, that one of the largest and best managed banks connected with India had experienced extremely heavy losses, which, directly or indirectly were mainly occasioned by the changed value of the Indian currency. Almost simultaneously there came a telegraphic summary of the Financial Statement of the Indian Government, announcing a loss of three millions sterling during the past year from the fall in the value of silver, and an estimated loss of no less than four millions from the same cause during the current year. Thus at last the serious nature of this monetary revolution was placed fully before the public. Despite the war expenditure of upwards of two and a half

millions, and despite the usual outlay upon public works, the Indian Budget would have shown a perfect balance—nay, a small surplus—but for this heavy loss in the “exchanges,” but owing to it there was the deficit of three and a quarter millions. “Relieve us of this loss on the exchanges,” said the Financial Statement in substance, “and we shall be all right; but if it is to continue we must remain hopelessly embarrassed.” Let us see, then, what this Silver Question really is.

To change the value of the counters during an evening’s play at cards would be an intolerable procedure: if the value were raised, it would unfairly increase the gains of the winners,—if the value of the counters were lowered, it would unjustly relieve the previously unsuccessful players, when summing up the results of the play. But if such a change were made only upon the counters held by one side, and not all round, the injustice would well-nigh be equalled by the perplexity which such a change would occasion. In rough fashion, the latter of these cases illustrates the state of matters produced between this country and India by the recent “depreciation” of silver. Nor does this statement fully sum up the hardships of the present case; for, by a rare cruelty of Fortune, while one party loses heavily, enormously, the other side benefits not at all. Although the counters are changed against India, England has gained nothing from the change. It is not merely that India is really England’s partner, not an opponent, and that, consequently, any loss to her is reflected back to a considerable extent upon ourselves; but, strange as it may seem, the actual fact is, that although the counters have been changed in our favour, the losses of the Indian Government have hitherto brought no gain

to ours. Lord Beaconsfield a few weeks ago, in one of his telling phrases, spoke of the high prices which our farmers obtained under the Corn Laws during bad harvests as a “dismal consolation,” inasmuch as it was obtained at the cost of dear food to the nation at large: but here, in this Silver Question, we have a dismal loss to the Government of India in its dealings with this country, which yields no compensation to us or to any one, and which falls as an unmitigated burden upon our fellow-subjects and fellow-countrymen in India.

But it may be said—as we have seen it said—“It is we who have always to send specie to India, not India to us. The balance of trade is constantly in favour of India, and we have annually to send millions in specie to settle that balance. How, then, can India lose upon the sending of specie to this country, when in actual fact she sends no specie at all?” But, in this view of the case, it is forgotten that an individual or a Government may lose heavily, not from having to pay away too much, but by receiving too little. Although India sends no specie to England, she may lose all the same by receiving less specie than would come to her under ordinary circumstances. This is the actual state of matters; but the mode in which the fall in the value of silver operates is multi-form. There is, first, the case as it stands between the two Governments; next, there is the case of the Indian population generally; and also there is the case of Englishmen temporarily resident in India.

First, as to the case between the two Governments. The Indian Government receives its entire revenue in silver; accordingly, it is only silver-money that it can employ in its expenditure. Now this

silver-money is as efficient as ever for all the domestic expenditure of the Indian Government,—for all its payments of salaries, for labour, &c. within its own territories. But the Indian Government constantly owes a large sum to our Government for what is called the “Home Charges”—which comprise military stores, pensions, and other expenditure payable in England, and which of late years have come to amount to from 12 to 14 millions sterling. These Home Charges, of course, are disbursed by our Government in British money—i.e., in gold. Accordingly, if the Indian Government sent payment of this sum in specie—that is, in its silver-money—it must transmit as much silver as will be equivalent to 12 or 14 millions in gold; and since silver has lost nearly one-fifth of its old value relatively to gold, the Indian Government must send so much more silver than formerly. In truth, the effect is the same as if each 1000 rupees sent from India to England dwindled down in the course of transit to only 800. But the Indian Government does not send specie. The process is this: The Home Government draws bills upon the Indian Government, payable in silver, and it sells these bills on the London Exchange to merchants who otherwise would have to discharge their debts to India by sending silver; and our Government continues to sell these bills, or “Council drafts,” until the sums which it receives in sterling money equal the amount of the Home Charges or disbursements which have been made on account of the Indian Government. Accordingly, as silver has fallen in value compared to gold, our Government has to issue a much larger amount of these silver-bills than formerly before it gets gold, or sterling money, to the

amount of its disbursements for the Home Charges. As is obvious, our Government gains nothing upon these transactions, although the Indian Government loses heavily—this year to the extent of four millions. On the other hand, when the Indian Government makes payments in India on account of our Government, these payments are a set-off against the Home Charges; whereby the nett loss to the Indian Government on “the exchanges” becomes this year $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions sterling.

This constitutes an absolute loss to the Indian Government. It is not like a loss produced by a falling-off in the revenue, in which case the money which fails to reach the Indian Treasury remains in the pockets of the Indian people. It is a sum which, after being paid by the people in taxes, becomes as wholly lost in the hands of the Government as if it were sunk in the depths of the sea. These four millions, or thereabouts, are a part of the taxation of India which is virtually destroyed, year by year, as soon as paid into the Indian Treasury. It is a heavy annual loss which befalls both the Government and the people of India. Wealthy as our own country is, what would we say if four millions of the revenue were thus to be destroyed, year after year, without the least return?

But there is an important section of the population of India upon whom this fall in the value of silver entails a double loss. This is the large and increasing class of our fellow-countrymen resident in India who have to send home a portion of their Government salaries or commercial incomes for the maintenance of their children or whole families in England. These persons not only lose, as taxpayers, in common with the rest of the popula-

tion, but they have to bear a further and very much heavier loss upon every remittance which they make to this country. What the amount of these annual remittances is, there are no exact means of knowing: but there are some statistics which enable us, probably, to come pretty near the truth. During the twenty years ending in 1875, the aggregate trade-balances in favour of India and against this country amounted to 388½ millions sterling; and during the same period 250½ millions of specie *nett* (i.e., after deducting exports from imports) were received in India, while 113 millions were settled by Council-drafts,—leaving 25½ millions sterling unaccounted for, and which, apparently, and as some of the authorities who gave evidence before the Silver Committee in 1876 believe, were settled by private remittances. This would show an average of £1,200,000 annually sent home by private individuals during these twenty years; and besides this, there are the remittances from soldiers and officers through the Indian Government, which annually amounts to fully half a million sterling. Moreover, since the journey to India was shortened and cheapened by the opening of the Suez Canal, the custom of keeping children or whole families at home, for health or education, has greatly increased, and will continue to increase; so that, whatever may have been the average annual sums sent home for this purpose during the twenty years ending in 1875, the amount must have become considerably larger of late years. This is a great hardship, a serious drain upon the incomes of our brethren in India. The transmission of money under all circumstances is attended with loss; for, in such transactions, there is always a loss of interest, and usually a charge for the cost or

trouble of transmission: but since this change took place in the value of silver, the effect is a loss of fully £100 upon every £600 sent home from India.

It is needless to say that this change in the value of silver likewise affects the conditions of Trade between India and the Western world; but, in this form, the effects fall almost equally upon both regions, and, though producing heavy loss to some classes both in England and India, there is no absolute loss to either country as a whole—except from the serious disturbance and obstruction of trade arising from the fluctuations in the value of silver from week to week and from month to month, which, of course, falls equally upon both countries. In considering the commercial effect of the changed value of silver relative to gold, it must be borne in mind that, as a matter of fact, the purchasing-power of silver in India as regards general commodities is as great as it used to be. Accordingly, as our money (gold) is worth more in Indian currency than formerly, our Importing merchants, who buy goods in India, obtain a profit from this cause alone, and in addition to the ordinary trade-profit. Any British capitalist who makes a purchase of property in India gains in similar fashion. And this gain is a very large one, amounting to about 17 per cent. On the other hand, our Exporting merchants, who send goods to India, lose to an equal extent;—they pay for these goods in our gold-money, and are paid at former prices in the silver-currency of India, which no longer carries its old value in this country. Thus, while our Importing merchants gain, our Exporting merchants lose to an equal extent. And, *vice versa*, the same is the case with Indian merchants, and in some degree with the classes

who supply them with goods. Accordingly, it may be said that, as regards commerce, the altered value of silver does not benefit or injure the trading-classes in either country as a whole,—both, however, suffering from the monetary disturbance, which tends to check the trade between the two countries. Nevertheless, England may be said to gain somewhat, inasmuch as we always import more goods from India than we export to that country.

Such, then, is the pecuniary extent and character of the effects of this recent change in the relative value of the two precious metals. But to our Indian Government the pecuniary loss is aggravated by the political embarrassment thereby occasioned. Our own country could not stand an annual loss of three or four millions without new taxation being necessary. Yet in India this natural remedy is unavailable. Political even more than financial considerations forbid it. The Indian population is so poor that even the shrewdest financiers cannot hit upon or devise a new tax that would be suitable and productive; and in the opinion of the wisest statesmen, the limits of bearable taxation are so nearly reached that even the severest financial emergency had better be borne as best it can, than that additional taxation should be had recourse to. Despite our new “scientific frontier,” there will always be a foreign Power at our doors ready and willing to stir up revolt in India; and even without any external danger, an addition to the revenue from new taxation would be dearly purchased at the expense of political disaffection among the millions of the native race.

It is now time to consider what has been the cause, or causes, of this recent and sudden change in the value of silver; especially as, until the causes are known, we have

no clue to a remedy, nor can even know in what direction to look for one. Let us briefly describe the factors in the case. First, there has been an increased production of silver. In 1859, as had been the case almost from the beginning of the century, the annual production of silver from the mines was about £8,000,000. In 1859, the famous Comstock-lode and other silver-mines in Nevada were discovered, the produce of which gradually increased until it reached its maximum, about eight millions sterling, in 1875; and at present the annual supply is about double what it used to be prior to 1860. Next, there is the demonetisation of silver which has taken place in various countries. In 1865, Italy adopted inconvertible paper-money, —its previous metallic currency, nearly all silver, having been somewhat under 18 millions; and doubtless nearly all of this amount was thrown upon the market. But this produced no appreciable effect upon the value of silver, which remained at about its old price until 1872,—after which year it fell rapidly, reaching the lowest point at which it has ever since stood in the autumn of 1876. Nevertheless, in the intervening years—*i.e.*, between 1872 and 1876—the quantity of silver thrown upon the market by demonetisation was comparatively insignificant. In May 1876, when the Parliamentary Committee made its report, the silver thus thrown on the market was only 8 millions sterling, —namely, “£6,000,000 sold by Germany, and about £2,000,000 set free by the action of the Scandinavian kingdoms.” Moreover, France, during the same period (1871-75) absorbed no less than £33,500,000 of silver in partial replenishment of her currency, which had been greatly reduced by the payment of the war-

indemnity to Germany. These direct effects of the demonetisation of silver, therefore, down to 1876, could not of themselves have produced any appreciable influence upon the value of that metal; and undoubtedly the very low point to which the price of silver fell in 1876 was greatly due to panic. But since then, the effects of demonetisation have been operating cumulatively and gradually. In resuming specie-payments the United States have adopted a single gold-currency; while in Europe the previous annual absorption of silver in the currencies of the leading Continental States has entirely ceased.

Thirdly, we come to the "Council drafts," or bills drawn by our Government upon the Government of India; and here we at once discern a most potent cause of the fall in the value of silver. Under the old East India Company, the Home Government bills drawn upon India averaged little more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions sterling: but during the last twelve years, ending with April 1878, the amount of these Home bills has averaged no less than $12\frac{1}{2}$ millions; and at present they amount to a still larger sum. These bills take the place of silver: their effect is exactly the same as if the produce of the silver-mines had been equally increased.

Thus, during the last twenty years, while the annual produce of the silver-mines has increased by about eight millions, the annual amount of the Home bills, exactly equivalent to silver, has increased by twelve millions. At the same time the depression of trade has of late stopped the rapid expansion of the Export trade of India, which kept up an expanding demand for silver (or for the Home bills equivalent to silver), to pay for

these Indian goods. Further, the demonetisation of silver in many of the leading countries of the West has greatly diminished the old requirement for that metal, and has proportionately increased the requirement for gold. And finally, the production of Gold has been steadily decreasing, and now stands at fully one-third below the maximum yield of the mines in 1852-58—the annual production since 1870 having averaged only 19 millions, or fully ten millions below the earlier rate of supply.

Such are the circumstances, operating in combination, which have produced the change in the value of silver, the currency of our Indian Empire, as compared with the gold-money of this country. But a vitally important question is, Is this fall in the value of silver only relative—that is, compared with gold,—or is it absolute, and as measured in general commodities? Obviously, if the value of silver has fallen absolutely—if its general purchasing-power is diminished in India, as well as elsewhere,—in other words, if the rupee in India no longer buys as much goods or labour, or goes so far in wages and rent of houses and land, as before,—then the Indian Government might relieve itself of its losses and difficulties by increasing the land-tax and other sources of revenue. No doubt, this would be a disagreeable course, because currency-questions are rarely understood by the masses, and the Indian population would grumble at the apparent increase of the taxation, rather than perceive or acknowledge the change in the value of the currency which justified and rendered it necessary. Still, if silver had really and unmistakably fallen in value in India, an increase of taxation would be the natural, and perfectly just and reasonable, remedy for the financial

difficulties of the Indian Government,—the people really paying, and the Government receiving, no more value than before.

Politically disagreeable as even a purely nominal increase of taxation is, we might well believe that the Indian Government, under its present difficulties, would be the first to advocate the adoption of so simple a remedy as this, if it were justified by the facts. But the Indian Government holds an entirely opposite opinion. It maintains explicitly that there has been no fall in the value of the Indian currency; and in one of its memorials to the Home Government, it gives elaborate tables of prices to show that, taking commodities on the whole, the purchasing-power of the rupee is as great as ever.* Also, so far from the Indian population losing faith in their silver-money, the recent unusual exports of gold from India are said (and apparently correctly) to be owing to the fact that the natives are taking this course for the very purpose of adding to their silver-money,—finding that they can procure a much larger number of rupees for their gold than usual. In short, the Viceroy and his Council, who have ample means of knowing the facts, maintain that, whatever be the state of matters in the West, silver maintains its old value in India, and that the dilemma is owing to the value of gold having risen.

This statement of fact is entirely in accordance with the opinion arrived at by the American Commission upon the Silver Question in 1876. That Commission, although they made their report at the time when silver had sunk to

the lowest point which it has ever reached, confidently maintained that “since 1873 the purchasing-power of gold has increased in all countries, and the purchasing-power of silver has decreased in none.” Be this as it may, undoubtedly silver maintains its usual purchasing-power in India. As silver is the sole currency of India, the demand for it as Money (which we hold to be nowadays the chief cause of the value of the precious metals) is greater there than in the Western world; and secondly, a plethora of silver, as of gold, is latest of being felt in countries commercially remote from the mining or producing countries. Moreover, the present state of matters actually tends to *increase* the value of the Indian currency; because India has now to give an extra quantity of silver in her payments to this country, whereby the amount of her currency is being annually reduced. The actual form of the transaction is different, because some amount of silver is always being received by India through the balance of trade; but as India has now to give more silver than usual in discharge of her foreign debt, she receives less silver than formerly, so that the annual addition to her currency has been greatly diminished. Under such circumstances, one can readily understand how silver still maintains its old value in our Eastern empire; and assuredly, if there were any fall, it must be due to some other cause than a superabundance of silver. Legislation and other causes may make silver a drug in the West, but certainly it is not so in the East.

We see one ground, but only one,

* This statement is supported by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, who report that “the purchasing-power of the rupee in respect of ordinary articles of consumption, such as the food of the people, remains undiminished.”—*Parl. Paper*, Aug. 11, 1877.

for the surmise that some fall has occurred in the value of the rupee in India,—not, certainly, from any redundancy of silver, such as exists in the West, but from the diminished value of silver when employed in foreign payments being reflected back to some extent upon the entire currency. The ground to which we refer is this: A depression of trade is naturally accompanied by a fall in prices, such as we have here; and if India were equally suffering from commercial depression, we should expect (if silver maintains its old value) an equal fall of prices in that country—*i.e.*, a temporary *rise* in the purchasing-power of the currency. That such a fall of prices had occurred in 1876 was explicitly stated by Mr R. W. Crawford before the Silver Committee of that year; but, so far as we can see, the Indian Government simply maintain that prices remain as they were in 1873. If Mr Crawford's statement be correct, the chain of proof is complete as to silver maintaining its old value in India. In any case, it must be remembered that in India, judging from the statistics of its Foreign trade, the commercial depression is much less severe than it is in this country.

If silver—the currency—were redundant in India, there would be a rise of prices and a period of prosperity,—which is invariably the first effect of a new supply of the precious metals, or of the one which constitutes the currency. But there is no plethora of silver in India. All the highest authorities are agreed upon this point; indeed, they hold that India could absorb even more silver, as currency, than she at present possesses. Her currency only becomes “depreciated,” or loses a portion of its general purchasing-power, when it is sent abroad to countries where silver has become

redundant. For illustration, let us liken the stock of silver in each country to a reservoir of water. In India this reservoir stands at its usual level, and its contents sell at the ordinary price; but she has to send a portion of her stock to other countries where the reservoir has become unusually full, and where, consequently, water has fallen in price: so that India has to send more of her own stock than before, proportionately reducing her own supply. In this way India loses, yet the other countries do not gain. If the sluices were fully open, the superabundant fluid in the West would flow into the India reservoir, equalising prices in both regions, and with great advantage to both of them. It is true that the supply might still be overmuch, occasioning a fall in the value of the commodity both in East and West; but in so far as the West got rid of any portion of its redundant stock, it would benefit, and India would benefit (as the whole world lately did from the gold-mines), even if the supply were such as somewhat to cheapen the commodity. But one part of the present dilemma consists in the fact that the sluices are half-shut,—the increase of the Council drafts *pro tanto* checking the ordinary flow of silver to India,—at the very time that the voluntarily-adopted process of demonetising silver is making that metal redundant in the West.

The prevailing Depression of Trade—a state of matters which always disturbs the normal value of money—renders it difficult to determine how far some of the circumstances connected with the value of gold and silver are of a temporary or permanent character. But for the recent demonetisation of silver, we believe that the increase in the annual production of that metal would not have been in

excess of the requirements for it. At present, owing to the diminished yield of the gold-mines, the annual supply of the precious metals, taken together, is no greater than it has been throughout the last quarter of a century. Accordingly, it is a fact worthy of more attention than it at present receives, that the effect of demonetising silver must proportionately raise the value of gold. While the supply of the precious metal remains as it is, a plethora of silver in the Western world in consequence of demonetisation implies a concomitant appreciation of gold. The merchants and bankers in the City of London have memorialised the Government on the "scarcity of metallic currency;" but what other result could be expected from the recent work of demonetising silver?

The source of the silver dilemma is *here*—in the West—not in India. And so long as we fail to see this, and go on trying to devise a remedy by making changes in India, we are wasting our time and thought. At the best, anything done in India would but touch the outer fringe of the silver question: we should be dealing with some of its consequences, instead of curing the evil itself. Led by England, the Western world is abandoning silver as money, reducing it to a mere metal; and hence we are depriving it of the chief source of its value, and which it has possessed since the beginning of civilised society. British statesmen of all parties, adopting the views of scientific authorities, have united in extolling the advantages of "monometallism" in the form of a single gold standard. To such a pitch has this nostrum been carried, that the United States were preached into adopting a single gold standard when resuming specie-payments; and the publicists in this country

have been filled with indignation that any proposals like Bland's Silver Bill should be made for giving even a limited circulation to silver in the American Republic. Well, our wise men have got what they wanted. The German Empire discarded silver and adopted a single gold standard; so have the Scandinavian kingdoms; and France, in self-defence, has had to close her Mint against silver, to avoid being deluged with the silver discarded by its neighbours. Surely our statesmen and economists ought to be well content! Yet no sooner is what they have so long preached being practised, than they find that the British Empire suffers more than any other country from the change. Nevertheless, they shut their eyes to their own part in the matter, and choose to regard the present dilemma as if it were one of India's making; and the Indian Government is to be tortured and disturbed in order that one evil consequence of their own doctrine may be somewhat lessened.

For the present, our Indian Empire suffers most severely from the recent change in the relative value of gold and silver: but the question is one of a world-wide character; and unless it be dealt with as such, no amount of retrenchment or petty financial devices can prevent India from ere long suffering more than at present. We are told that "the loss must be faced manfully," as if it were a famine or visitation of Providence; whereas it is as entirely an evil of man's making as anything can possibly be. "Legislation," says Mr Gladstone, "can do nothing;" and yet the dilemma is born of legislation, and its authors are Governments, not Providence. By Act of Parliament we discarded silver and adopted a single gold standard in 1816; we imposed a single silver standard upon India

in 1836; and recently, Acts of Congress and of Parliaments have extended the single gold standard over a large portion both of Europe and America. Yet when these Acts of legislation begin to bear their fruits, our statesmen calmly protest that legislation has nothing to do with the evil, and that they can do nothing to mitigate it! The evil "must be faced manfully"! That is all that as yet they can think, or bring themselves to say on the subject.

The proposal has been made, and for some time was favourably entertained, to demonetise silver in India, and adopt a single gold-standard, as in this country. What would be the effect of such a procedure? It would at once destroy a large portion of the value of the present silver-currency of India, amounting to at least 200 millions sterling, besides creating in that country a monetary revolution of the severest character. This would be a strange way of benefiting India! Secondly, thereafter we should have to make all our payments to India in gold instead of silver,—whereby silver, from being disused for this purpose, would still further decline in value to an enormous extent. Further, where would we get the new supply of gold wanted for these payments, and without which it would be impossible to carry on our usual trade with the East? The annual supply of gold, as we have already said, has been diminishing for twenty years, and now stands at a low point compared with what it did when the "golden age" was in its prime. We hold most confidently that as soon as trade revives and resumes its old and normal condition of progress, the diminished yield of the gold-mines will make itself felt very sharply; and this change will be first and most severe-

ly felt in our own country, under the absurd and pernicious currency-system established in 1844. But for the new gold-mines, the Act of 1844 must have been abandoned as impracticable many years ago; and now that the gold-supply is diminishing (although still more than double what it was in 1848), the unsuitableness of such a Currency Act for an expanding commerce will again be forced upon the attention of the public. How much more serious would be the dilemma were silver demonetised in our Indian Empire. Were it to become necessary to send gold instead of silver to India, the scarcity of gold and the further destruction of the value of silver would not merely break down our own monetary system (for which we should have no regret), but would seriously disturb monetary affairs generally, besides checking the great and most valuable trade between India and the countries of the West.

If such would be the effects of demonetising silver in India, how much vaster would be the calamity produced by likewise and simultaneously pursuing the present process of demonetising silver in Europe and America? Fortunately, we can hardly believe that Governments will persevere in, or that nations will tolerate, so suicidal a policy. Mankind will not allow themselves to be strangled in deference to any theories or doctrines, however "well established" they may be held to be. A single gold-standard, no doubt, suits our own country,—especially when gold is so abundant as it still is; but to preach up this form of "monometallism" for universal adoption in civilised countries, and to pour contempt upon the "double standard," is one of the most perilous freaks of "science falsely so called." It would cut our own throat, to begin with, by

making gold too scarce for the maintenance of our own monetary system. For the world at large, our own country included, such a change would produce the widest and most oppressive calamity that human intelligence or folly ever created. It is now acknowledged on all hands that our recent commercial prosperity, and the general wellbeing of mankind, have been greatly owing to the large supply of the precious metals from Californian and Australian mines. To proceed in the work of demonetising silver would not only undo these benefits, but would create disasters far exceeding in magnitude the past blessings. It would destroy about one-half of the entire stock of the world's money. It would not merely paralyse commerce and rob industry of its due reward, but it would intensify the worst evils of old-established Society. It would make the rich vastly richer, and the poor still poorer. We often hear, from certain quarters, of "bloated capitalists" accumulating fortunes at the expense of the labouring classes; but even if capitalists were the sole and unchecked legislators of the world, they could not devise any law so purely and exorbitantly for their own interests as one for the demonetisation of silver—for the destruction of one half of the world's currency, and the consequent doubling or quadrupling of the value of their own capital. Such a course would promote the "social revolution" far beyond all the preaching

of French Communists or Russian Nihilists.

We repeat, we cannot believe that such an issue will be arrived at. But political and scientific doctrines have been and still are running in favour of a single gold standard, with the consequent demonetisation of the sister metal. Among our own politicians, Mr Goschen is the only one who has in any degree protested against the disastrous doctrine hitherto in vogue; and it is lamentable to find that when the Silver Question is discussed in the House of Commons, our statesmen express their belief that legislation can do nothing. It is true that the difficulty cannot be solved by the action of any single Government; but it can, and ere long must, be dealt with by means of an International Congress. The United States proposed such a Congress a year ago; but the British Government, with the cordial approval of the House of Commons, refused to take any active part in it, and our Commissioner was specially enjoined to uphold the single gold standard. The Commission, thus neglected by the European Governments, proved abortive. But we feel assured that this course is the only proper one, and the only one which can be effective; and the sooner an International Congress upon the Silver Question is renewed, with the concurrence of all the leading Governments, the better will it be, not merely for our Indian Empire, but for the world at large.

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE.

VII. READERS.

WE fancy that if great discoverers and inventors had projected their imaginations into the future, and vaguely realised the responsibilities they were incurring, their labours might have been paralysed by scruples and misgivings. Their sensibilities must have taken the alarm, and even immortality might have seemed to be bought too dear, if the legacy of blessings they left behind were to be largely leavened by evil. Happily perhaps for the cause of progress, the persevering student absorbed in his researches merges comprehensiveness of thought in intense concentration. The brightening possibilities of splendid results cast a circle of cheering light on the experiments of the study and laboratory; and the acute and brilliant intellect, when searching out the secrets of science, thinks less of the welfare of its species than of vanquishing the obstacles that baffle it. Gunpowder and the wonderful art of printing must have been discovered much about the same time. The chemist who combined the ingredients of the explosive might have congratulated himself on the triumphs of peaceful engineering—on blasting communications through mountain-ranges, facilitating communication between communities who had hitherto held each other at arm's length—on stormy roadsteads changed into safe anchorages—on submarine reefs cleared out of the ocean highways—and on an enormous economy of life and property. But if he had had a prescience of the destructive development of projectiles, we suspect he would have found slight

consolation in the suggestion, that the introduction of his explosive into war might really make warfare less bloody. Rather would he have been haunted all the same by the lurid panorama of battle-fields strewn with the dead and dying; of hospitals crowded with the maimed and wounded; of mines and bursting shells spreading sorrow and suffering broadcast. Unless he had been sublimely indifferent to the miseries of mankind, he must surely have turned the key on his crucibles and retorts, and determined that his terrible secrets should die with him.

Even had they been diviners as well as illustrious discoverers, we do not say that the trio of worthy burghers, who stand immortalised in bronze on the Rossmarkt at Frankfort, in their flat bonnets and flowing raiment, need have been similarly influenced by sinister forebodings. With Gutenberg, Fust, and Schoeffer, the weighing the consequences of their revolutionary invention might have been in great measure a matter of temperament; for there can be no doubt as to the preponderance of benefits that the printer has bestowed on the world. But even there, notwithstanding the diffusion of light and knowledge, there are decidedly two sides to the question; and a man of a morbid mind, disposed to ingenious self-torment, might well have shrunk back in hesitation from the visions of his prophetic soul. He might have seen insidious and destructive agencies at work in the abuse of his types and the prostitution of his presses. Though at

least one of the partners in the Strasburg firm appears to have been somewhat sharp in his business transactions, we have reason to believe that all three in the main were pious, discreet, and well-disposed citizens. They must have been scandalised and shocked, had they foreseen themselves indirectly the authors of baleful treatises by atheists or casuists, intended to shake the faith of Christendom, and throw open the floodgates of scepticism and immorality ; of subversive and revolutionary pamphlets, sapping the foundations of society, and endangering the moral balance of the world. Of cheap catchpenny publications meant to pander to the passions of the million, and glorify the crimes that are prompted by idleness or vulgar craving after evil notoriety. Of libels that pillory their victims on charges of which they may be innocent ; or of inuendoes, that are only to be disposed of by reopening the wounds they may have caused. Or even, perhaps, of the innumerable volumes of the very lightest reading, which at the worst can only be characterised as frivolous, though they are austere taboos in the stricter households as most pernicious nourishment for the immature mind.

But, setting aside the positive mischief that may be attributed to them directly or indirectly, the fathers of the printing trade accepted a grave responsibility in exciting a world that was intellectually tranquil. To us, looking back upon them out of the light, those so-called "dark ages" seem sufficiently dreary. In the intervals of those active occupations which are scarcely suited to our quieter modern tastes — feuds, fighting, fire-raising, rapine, rapes, &c. — it appears to us that time must have

dragged along very heavily. In reality, to the mass of those who knew no better, those times of universal ignorance and torpidity must have been at least negatively agreeable. With the rare exception of some solitary student, of some scheming churchman, or some statesman in advance of his age, we may take it for granted that nobody thought very deeply. There was no wear-and-tear of the mental fibres, and, consequently, there were none of those painful brain and nerve diseases that fill our asylums, and are transmitted by descent. So the stomach had a similar immunity from strain, and the unimpaired digestion was never troubled by abstruse thought or far-fetched anxieties, — which, by the way, was a most beneficent provision of providence, when we remember the character of the mediæval *cuisine*, and the habits of feasting among the rich and idle. What passed for thought with society generally was the mechanical action of a languid brain working in the narrowest circles of its immediate interests and cares. Concern with a future state was the special care of the clergy ; the Church had settled the dogmas which the devout had only to receive. Gurth, the swineherd, for example, in his lively philological chat with Wamba the jester, in the Yorkshire forests of Cedric the Saxon, is among the most fanciful and unlikely creations of the rich genius of Scott. We may be sure that he knew or cared about nothing beyond the pigs that were his particular charge, or the bodily sensations of the moment. Even the thrall's hot-headed master, or the neighbouring Baron of Torquilstone, had no more the habit of consecutive thought than the monkey who, in a mood of apparent pre-occupation, makes a clutch at a companion's tail, or

turns away energetically in an insect chase. It is next to impossible nowadays to realise the condition of the nobleman or county squire, unable to read or to write, who groped his way from the cradle to the grave in the profoundest mental darkness. He never troubled his head about foreign politics, unless he were personally summoned to serve beyond seas; or when some strolling wayfarer like Wilfrid of Ivanhoe brought news of the wars in France or Palestine. Nor did he concern himself much more about domestic broils, unless they seemed likely to cost him his head, or bring him some addition to his domains. Such conversation as there was over the heavy banqueting, beyond remarks on the cooking of the joints and the quality of the heady liquors, turned generally on matters manorial or parochial. The guests grew excited over the encroachment of some neighbour on the rights of free-forestry, the latest deed of audacity of the nearest band of outlaws, a raid on the droves of swine, or a murrain in the herds of cattle. Men were forced to drink hard and long after supper, since there was nothing else to be done, and so the heavy brains became slowly sodden, and still more insensible to intellectual stimulants.

To us the life seems dull, we repeat; and we can hardly realise getting through wet days and long winter evenings in a country-house, with neither tobacco, billiards, newspapers, nor the resources of a fairly stocked library. But it had the great advantage of making the men who were born to it, accept existence with the acquiescence of a sluggish philosophy. It made them welcome as excitements they might almost be grateful for, what we are in the habit of regarding as the "horrors" of the times; and it

braced them for the worst they had to bear, if the tide of circumstances went against them. They might stand a siege with complacency, so long as it was enlivened by assaults, and till they came to be seriously straitened for provisions; while raids across the Borders or civil strife brought them changes of scene and chances of booty. Even if they were caught and held to ransom, and lowered, laden with chains, into one of those horrible dungeons which may still be inspected at Warkworth and elsewhere, their habits of mental vacuity must have brought them ineffable consolation. In the words of Artemus Ward, the captive "lacked the reksit fancy and imagination" to excite himself over possibilities of protracted suffering. Wealthy and well-born as he might be, and habituated to active pursuits in the open air, he was in much the same blessedly benighted condition which makes a being like the shepherd of the plague-stricken Campagna support the dismal vicissitudes of a miserable lot with the stoical serenity and resignation of ignorance.

While the many were happy in their own simple way, and in a blissful innocence of the very existence of intellectual pleasures, the few to whom circumstances offered some occasions of cultivation, enjoyed the sense of a relative superiority without eating to excess of the tree of knowledge. We do not speak of such phenomenal potentates as Alfred the Great or Edward the Confessor, who actually devoted the royal leisure to study, and drew with generous profusion on their scanty treasures for the patronage of letters and the purchase of manuscripts. Nor of such miracles of learning as the Venerable Bede, who were prodigies indeed, consider-

ing their opportunities. But in the more richly endowed convents there were "gentlemen and scholars," who, without by any means overtaxing their mental powers, abandoned themselves to a life of faintly-lettered ease. Even in those cloistered shades where the lamp of learning gave a glimmering light, the literary atmosphere was relaxing. No one dreamed of systematic study with a purpose, except occasionally one of those ambitious priests who aspired to political power or the greatest places in the hierarchy. The prelates and higher dignitaries were easy-going men of the world, who mixed in the best society, and were satisfied with their attainments if they could spell out their breviaries. They showed their sense of the responsibilities of their office by a display of gems and sumptuous garments, and were more curious in the refectory arrangements and the replenishing of their cellars than as to the precious contents of the conventual libraries. Their humbler brethren imitated them in their degree, living less for study than for devotion or sensuality, according to their tastes and temperaments. But their cloth, with such attainments as they possessed, had given them a certain consideration. They took their walks abroad among a lawless population, who, nevertheless, respected the cowl, unless in very exceptional circumstances; and they came back from their walks with sharpened appetites to ample repasts and placid slumbers. Or they might abstract themselves, if they inclined to that, in pious meditations or in dozing over the familiar characters in the Church services. But whether they gave themselves over to self-indulgence or to rapt contemplation,—whether we look on them from the point of view of an

Epicurus or a St Thomas A Kempis,—theirs was a tranquil lot, if it was not positively pleasurable.

And all that easy-going tranquillity the discovery of printing recklessly disturbed. Of course, the diffusion of knowledge was very gradual; and for long the spirit of inquiry and research stirred almost imperceptibly on the surface of society. Yet from the first, men's minds were being agitated here and there by the disquieting ideas they forced upon their neighbours. As yet the monks and the secular clergy had pretty much a monopoly of thought; and even with them the practice of thought was slavishly regulated by tradition. The Church had prescribed the convictions which were in turn imposed upon the laity. But now came the beginnings of the change of which modern readers are become the victims. It is true that in England the premonitory signs had been visible in the vagaries of such original thinkers as Wycliffe. But those pestilent heresies had been half smothered from their birth, in the absence of any means of circulating them; while the propagators might be fined, incarcerated, or even burned, as an impressive warning to their immediate neighbours. With printing and the promiscuous circulation of books the mischief that had broken out in Germany was spread everywhere by insidious contagion, like the Black Death of the fourteenth century. But unlike that subtle and deadly plague, it has gone on running its course ever since, and diffusing itself gradually through all classes of the community. The ferment of thought, the restless craving for intellectual excitement of some kind, have been stimulated; till now, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, we are being driven along at high-

pressure pace ; and it is impossible for any one who is recalcitrant to stop himself. If you do not read for yourself, you are constrained to listen ; and there is no getting beyond the reach of the press, unless you should be cast away, like Crusoe, upon some desert island. The penny papers of yesterday are to be found in the parlour of each back-of-the-world alehouse ; and there is generally some intelligent rustic, more advanced than the rest, who volunteers to spell them out and comment on them for the benefit of the circle of gaping smokers. Localities, interests, and trades have their special organs ; and the broad-sheets of the 'Police News' with kindred publications circulate freely among the criminals and roughs of our cities. The printing-press has always come in the wake of the pioneers who run up their temporary townships of wooden shanties among the prairies and mining locations of the great American continent. European colonists carry their journals along with them ; the natives they have settled among imitate their example ; till it seems probable that shortly the only societies that will not support their "organs of public opinion" are those where they murder the stranger and possibly eat him afterwards. Where the trader seldom penetrates the missionary has set down his foot ; and even if you have betaken yourself to the savage life in the wilderness, the well-meaning countryman who offers you his hospitality will press news upon you, whether you like it or no. Some chance *rencontre* may undo the effects of a protracted period of total abstention, and a piece of intelligence as exciting as unwelcome may revive these artificial cravings from which you have been striving to wean yourself. The ex-

periment of secluding one's self from the society of one's kind, and submitting to a rigorous moral quarantine, has signally failed under the most favourable conditions. Few people have given it a fairer trial than that strong-minded female, Lady Hester Stanhope. She had lived in the full fever of English politics and society, and had sickened of it ; disgust had grown out of satiety ; her hopes had been blighted and her ambitions baffled. Believing in these supernatural existences with whom she held secret communion, she seemed to have fairly left this trivial world behind her, and to be anticipating the interests of a future state. Her mental isolation in her shattered Syrian fortress was scarcely likely to be troubled by her Albanian mercenaries or her Italian doctor. But in a moment of weakness she is left to herself, and tempted to an interview with the author of 'Eothen ;' and the enchanter transports her by his charmed conversation from the solitudes of the Lebanon to the *salons* of Mayfair.

These medieval revolutionists undoubtedly originated a great variety of industries which employ a vast number of brains and hands. Authors, publishers, and critics ; machine-makers, printers, compositors, "readers," newspaper boys, &c., &c., are indebted to them for their daily bread. But we cannot withhold a tribute of regret to one occupation which they cut up root and branch. We refer to those pious and painstaking artists who made a labour of love of the transcription and illumination of the sacred manuscripts and missals ; who carried the freshness of the fields, the bloom of the wild flowers, the plumage of the birds, and the tints of the insects, into the grim seclusion of their clois-

tered cells. One of the fraternity was the Dominican De Voragine, the original compiler of the 'Golden Legend,' one of the stories in which has been so gracefully modernised by Longfellow. Our readers will remember how the humble peasant maiden offers her life for the redemption of that of Henry of Hohenek. And none of the truthful pictures in the legend are more fascinating than that of the venerable Father Pacificus. We see him, like the saintly Fra Angelico, preparing himself prayerfully for his task, and reverently transcribing the words of the evangelist in simple awe of the terrible curse on the man who should takeught from the book of the prophecy by dropping out a line or a letter. We picture the worthy monk over his blazonry, distracted between his pride in the tail of his peacock, and his penitence for his worldly self-satisfaction. The compositor who has succeeded him has no leisure to be so careful or conscientious ; and we fear he has seldom such legible manuscript to copy from. The transition from the father in his cell in the Black Forest convent, to that of the busy printing offices in a modern capital, marks the progress of the great social revolution since Prince Henry of Hohenek made his pilgrimage to Rome. Look in at the publishing office of a great daily paper as the time is drawing on after midnight through the small hours. The solid walls and floors are sensibly vibrating to the ceaseless revolutions of the steam-engines. The sound of the machinery comes in as a subdued bass to the murmur of voices and the pattering of feet. The heavy atmosphere is thickened by the flare of the smoky gas, where the energy of modern enterprise has not replaced gas by the electric

light. Nimble fingers are moving by instinct about the compartments of the type-boxes, mechanically translating thought into metal. There is a hum of "reading" from a dozen different places ; and every now and then, from some chamber apart, comes spasmodically the steady click of the telegraph. You are never secure from some fresh irruption of news, that may compel a modification of the arrangements that must always be provisional. A revolution may have broken out in Japan, or death may have surprised some distinguished personage ; and competitors are to be outstripped by commenting on the facts, and elaborating details autobiographical or otherwise. Conceive the feelings of the respectable Herr Fust, could he have dropped in upon the quick-witted and facile scribes who have replaced Pacificus and his slow-going competitors. There are laborious individuals still busy with the scissors and the paste, when the eyes of their families and friends have been closed for hours in peaceful slumber. There are a couple of gentlemen at least dashing off the leaders, pronouncing judicially and literally with the rapidity of thought on the debate that is drawing to a close in the House, or the event that may be the starting-point of a new cycle of policy. It is an accomplishment that readers scarcely appreciate at its value,—that of writing calmly, consecutively, and reflectively under an excess of high pressure ; with the *arrière pensée* that you are hopelessly lost, should you hesitate or your inspiration fail you. When the thread of your ideas is being perpetually interrupted by the presentation for quick but close revision of the earlier slips of your comprehensive article ; and when you know that your brain-work will

be scanned and criticised by the capable experts whose ideas you are controverting. Then there are "the able editor" and his faithful *aides*, who must always have all their wits about them, night after night and month after month. It is for them to direct and control the whole; to procure at least a creditable semblance of consistency on the widest range of conceivable subjects, political, religious, financial, and social. A decision to be dashed at on the spur of the moment may commit them to a policy there is no reconsidering, and do irretrievable injury to their reputation for perspicuity; while the matter for a damaging action for libel may lie lurking in the lines of the most insignificant paragraph. Happily the inexorable hour is approaching which dismisses them to an interval of comparative repose. Time and the early expresses will wait for no one, and the items of belated news must stand aside for the later editions. Then the bustle is promptly stilled as by enchantment; the troops of dishevelled workmen disperse; the jaded editor and his staff go home to supper and bed; a practised hand or two and some half-dozen of boys may be trusted with the completion of the mere mechanical operations. The endless web gliding through the grasp of the cylinders is turned into piles of copies of the 'Times' or the 'Standard'; and an hour or two later they are being scattered broadcast over the country, to be thrown aside the next day for their ephemeral successors.

It is a waste of work that is continually repairing itself, like the tissues and fibres of the human body. There was a time when the tiny London 'News-letter' was very patiently expected in the provinces, reaching its destination in days or

weeks, according to circumstances. The delay of a few days up or down went for nothing; and it was just as well, when coaches or stage-waggons were continually coming to grief, and a rainfall or a snow-storm might make the roads impassable. When the sheet arrived at last, it was leisurely spelled through, and deliberately passed on, since copies were few and far between, and the subscription to it an extravagance of rank and position. Now each of the quick morning-trains drops its bundles of damp letter-press at every station; and forthwith the folding is done, which there was no time for in the scramble at headquarters. In each village there is a small shopkeeper who acts as news-agent, distributing the papers, sooner or later, over the length and breadth of his district. Travel where you will on the iron network, you can never lag many hours behind the times. You start from Scotland for town in considerable anxiety, worrying yourself over the fate of some shaky investment; there have been whispers as to the bank you have pinned your faith on; or you are disconcerted by your "Egyptians" being freely sold. You think it as well to have an interview with your London broker, as the set of affairs seems to be towards a panic. If you have succeeded in snatching some hours of sleep, you waken up somewhere in Yorkshire or Lancashire, to have the journals from Leeds or Manchester thrust in at the carriage-window; and you learn all that has transpired at the Stock Exchange the day before, since the latest issues of the 'Globe' or 'Pall Mall.' Your mind being full of a certain subject, you are anxious for fuller information or iteration, and you have it in the fullest extent at Peterborough or Rugby, where the

London papers are awaiting your arrival. When you call upon your broker in Threadneedle or Throgmorton Streets, you are as thoroughly posted up as he can be in the current rumours of the night before. Nothing, perhaps, is more significant of the thirst for sensation, and of the indifference to the trifling cost at which it may be gratified, than a glance into the carriages of one of the suburban trains that has run into a city terminus before morning business-hours. Floors and cushions are covered with the penny papers that have been roughly torn open and hurriedly skimmed; acquaintances have exchanged the 'Standard' for the 'Telegraph'; there have been extensive orders for the 'Daily News,' if Cape letters are looked for from Mr Archibald Forbes; and there is a liberal sprinkling of the 'Sportsman' and 'Sporting News' left by gentlemen who, as a matter of business, are interested in the latest odds. The railway servants gather so rich a harvest that they can afford to become generous benefactors in their turn, of the cabmen on the rank and the patients in the hospitals.

As suggestive as the change from the cell of Pacificus to the modern printing-office, is that from the days of the old black-letter volumes to those of the railway bookstalls. When the hand-presses had been steadily at work for some time, the printed volumes of the world could still be almost counted on the fingers. Those cherished masterpieces of painstaking typography changed hands for something more than their weight in silver, in times when silver was scarce and dear; and when the perusal of the Scriptures had been permitted to the people, the Bibles chained in the chancels of the churches became the objects of Pro-

testant pilgrimages to the inquiring. For long, the rare books in circulation were such as had only an interest for the learned and the cultivated. There were reprints of the Fathers and the Classics, with an occasional treatise by some eminent contemporary controversialist; while such ponderous tomes were varied now and then by some lighter volume of travel or of poetry. Even down to the middle of the last century, the price of books was still almost prohibitory for the people, though the range of their subjects had been rapidly widening. Publishers were cautious, as they had good reason to be, and guarded against burning their fingers seriously by clubbing together for their ventures. Even writers who had already made a reputation, and travellers who had tales to tell of untravelled countries, felt it prudent to feel their way, and preferred to publish by subscription. Then friends and patrons rallied round them, and canvassed for them, or specialists put down their names; and when the work found favour with judges and the critics, it had a certain success and circulation. But as a rule, the bookseller's was the very last place where the wealthy squire or the lavish man of fashion dreamed of frittering away his money. For long afterwards the shelves of the ordinary country gentleman were scarcely better supplied than those of the fox-hunting and hard-drinking Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone. His fathers had made some provision against a wet day with books of heraldry, venery, or farriery; and he had added a standard authority or two to help him in the rough-and-ready justice he distributed. To suit the tastes of the chaplain or the ladies of the family, there were some volumes besides of ser-

mons, theology, and stage-plays. These worthy people had not the capacity for being amused by the lighter fancies of finer brains. The 'Castle of Otranto,' 'Rasselas,' or 'The Vicar of Wakefield,' were read and talked about in circles in the town, but they were seldom to be seen in the hall or the rectory-house; and though the valuation the bookseller had set on them seems low, in reality it was liberal, all things considered. The increasing popularity of novels and travels in the beginning of the century came simultaneously with the diffusion of wealth and the development of commercial enterprise; and when successive editions of the Waverley Novels were being snapped up as fast as they appeared, Glasgow and Liverpool were stretching along the Clyde and the Mersey, and eclipsing the old-established prosperity of Bristol. The fashion of light reading gained ground so fast, that for a time the supply fell short of the demand. It is impossible not to admire the shrewdness and audacity of some of the gentlemen who, anticipating the great modern discovery that anybody can write saleable fiction, volunteered to purvey the rubbish in demand. They had their reward in prices that make mouths water nowadays; for there were no circulating-library proprietors to act as middlemen—making wholesale purchases at a ruinous discount. But novel-reading, on the other hand, remained the luxury of the rich; and when you had bought your flimsy volumes at half-a-guinea apiece, you felt bound to read them studiously, and make the most of the bargain. Taking it deliberately by so many pages a-day, 'Almack's' or 'The Adventures of a Lady of Fashion' might be made to last through half the evenings of a win-

ter; and in the times of the stage-coaches and rattling post-chaises there could be no demand for travelling literature.

Now, at the railway bookstalls in England you have only to pick and choose; for though light and cheap literature predominates, there are copies of standard works in the background—the third edition of the 'Prince Consort's Life,' or the latest volume by Mr Kinglake or George Eliot. The bookstall appeals to the weaknesses of mankind, as well as to their praiseworthy love of information; and it has the same attraction for grown men and women as the pastry-cook's window for lounging school-boys. *Ennui* is weighing on the souls of the passengers who are waiting to "establish connections" with some train on a cross-line. Naturally, they gather towards the gay display of the bookstall, like flies flocking to honey, or bees to a bed of thyme. Those of them who are insensible to the sweets or the fragrance of volumes that have been written for every taste, are caught by the open sheets of the illustrated and comic journals. Others stare with some vague intention of buying, and generally buy in the end. The stall-keeper, in nine cases out of ten, is a voluble man of the world and a shrewd observer of physiognomies. He encourages the diffident, he imposes on the timid; and most of all, he knows how to make capital of the sprightly or self-sufficient traveller who engages him patronisingly in literary small-talk. For the English bookstall is an institution by itself, and the tables in foreign waiting-rooms or on the platforms are generally laid out for the English and Americans. With the frugal Germans, though it was the birthplace of the art, and in spite of

the trade energy of Leipsic, books of all kinds are still so dear that nobody indulges in the luxury of buying them. A German professor or politician will supply himself with the volumes that are professionally necessary for his home consumption; but through a long day's journey he will entertain himself with his thoughts or a solitary copy of the '*Kölnische Zeitung*.' The French publish their newest fiction cheaply enough in all conscience, and the paper-bound volumes at three francs and a half are scattered about the *salons* all over their country. But when travelling, they are content to chat, or sleep, or smoke; and except for the priests, who bury themselves in their breviaries, you see nothing but three-sous papers in circulation. On different occasions we made one of a party of both Germans and Frenchmen during their recent war. In either case there was a very agreeable mixed company of soldiers, surgeons, and gentlemen of the ambulance corps. We travelled by crawling trains on lines encumbered with troops and military stores. We covered the ground at something less than a league per hour, and it had been well known to all of us beforehand that the pace would be as problematical as the date of our delivery. Especially among the Germans, the great majority of our companions were exceptionally intelligent and well-educated men; and yet there was not even a pocket-volume in the party. We venture to say that we might have safely trusted ourselves to Providence with a saloon-carriage-full of Englishmen in similar circumstances. For, as a rule, an Englishman who is going any distance seems to think it as much a matter of course to lay in reading of some sort as to take a wrapper in winter

or a ticket at all times. And the bookstall, like poverty or a third-class carriage, introduces a man to a strange medley of companions. You recognise your old and half-forgotten friends in new and economical if not attractive disguise. The three-volume romances of Fenimore Cooper, the raw-head and bloody-bone early tales of Mr Ainsworth—who is now become, as we believe, the *doyen* of the corps of novel-writers—are compressed into flexible shilling editions. The type is small and faint, and may bother you if your vision begins to grow dim and if your bodily strength is abating. But what of that! For the life of you, you cannot help getting interested, as you used to be in the fortunes of Jack Sheppard or the Red Rover. For the once familiar characters begin to come out clearly again, as if you were exposing invisible ink to the sunshine; and it is far less the sensations of the plots that you enjoy, than the lively recollections you delight in reviving.

Then the exhibition on the bookstall is a very fair gauge of the style and the standing of our most popular novelists. Those who are already ranking as classics, whether shortly after their decease or while still in the flesh, rarely sink below the staid respectability of a solid cloth-binding. We have Thackeray and Dickens, Lord Lytton and George Eliot, taking out a reasonable lease of immortality in the meantime, in substantial boards of green or crimson. For ourselves, we are proud to avow that we wear out the strongest copy of '*Adam Bede*' or the '*Pickwick Papers*' in no time, thanks to knocking it about in portmanteaus and taking it up at odd moments in our dressing-room. But when they are treated with more distant respect in

the hands of less familiar admirers, those three-and-sixpenny and five-shilling editions must prove a decided saving in the long-run. Next comes a somewhat inferior type of writer, who sees himself indifferently published in the one class or the other—in cloth or on paper; and probably, if he be not above taking a hint, he may draw some practical lessons from the form of his reproduction. The lighter sensational authors who have their *clientèle* among the frivolous, must be content to live in the passing season, and the floridly extravagant illustrations on their covers are sufficient evidence of the tastes they appeal to. There is another school which we may call the intellectually sensational, who seem to play *le grand jeu*, and aspire to a rank to which they are scarcely entitled. They are bound so as to match the Dickens or George Eliot series; and were it not that the publishers must be shrewd men of business, we should fancy that their self-sufficiency provoked discomfiture, and that they were doomed to come to the ground between two stools. Finally, and not condescending to the unplaced in "the ruck," we have the fantastically-coloured volumes of the American humorists, whose fountains of fun would seem to be running dry. At least we have had nothing of late years which has at all taken the wind out of the sails of the 'Heathen Chinee,' or the 'Innocents at Home,' not to speak of the Biglow Papers or the Breitman Ballads.

Should you be idly disposed yourself, and inclined rather to observe than to read, it is amusing to note the studies of your fellow-travellers. There are certain stations of dignity that carry their social penalties; and a man who lives in the eyes of the world must take special care

how he compromises himself. We should imagine, for example, that it is very much for the benefit of the bishops and deans that the graver publications are displayed at the bookstalls. Just as a gay young officer when in full regimentals is bound to be on his best behaviour, so a gentleman in an apron or a shovel-hat can only unbend in the privacy of the closet. There might be no positive harm in his relaxing with a sensational story in a yellow cover; and if the case were submitted to the judgment of Convocation, he might pass through the ordeal of the trial without "a stain on his character." But there is always the chance of some serious inhabitant of the diocese, or a juvenile candidate for a coming confirmation, dropping into the opposite corner of the carriage, and he must shun the very semblance of a scandal. A curate on his promotion may be more indifferent to appearances, and, besides, he is likely to travel second-class; yet even he may be awkwardly caught out on occasion, and it is decidedly safer to show the wisdom of the serpent, even if you make no pretensions to the simplicity of the dove. The Law, in these respects, has the advantage of the Church. The Lord Chancellor and the Lord Chief-Justice of England are supposed, before all, to be men of the world. In passing judgment on an infinite variety of hard cases, they are supposed to know something of almost everything on earth, if they are to sum up satisfactorily or carry conviction to the minds of the litigants. So, in going through a promiscuous course of light literature, they may be supposed to be relaxing the strain of the bow, if they are not positively getting up facts for their profession. The judges have hard times of it, and their lot is less enviable than is popularly supposed.

But it is something to be permitted to change the wig for the wideawake, and the ermine for the shooting-coat; and refresh the mind with some imaginary scandal of the divorce courts, when you are on your way to seek change at the sea, or pay a round of visits in the country.

As it is with the judge, so it is with the medical man. He may do much as he pleases in his rare play-hours; and it is very well for his patients that it should be so. We remember going on a journey with a famous consulting physician—a physician who is pretty universally known in town; and so far, an obscure individual had the advantage of him. As it happened, we were aware of the purpose of his journey, which was to pronounce on the fate of a young wife, in whom her husband was entirely bound up. We happened to know, too, that the doctor was a singularly kind-hearted man, and that he always broke those terrible sentences of his with extreme tact and tenderness. He was a personal friend, besides, of the family who had called him in; and for his travelling literature he had taken the comic journals and the 'Pickwick Papers.' He was on the broad grin the best part of the way; and now and then he fairly burst out laughing, like a schoolboy going home for the holidays. In fact he was thoroughly enjoying the trip, and we did not at all blame him. The decision he went to give, as it turned out, was unfavourable; he had to extinguish hope and leave despair behind him; and yet, had we had a more direct interest in the matter, we should have said that he acted both kindly and wisely. For as there is much that is necessarily painful in life, and especially in the routine of a profession like his, the

best way to brace the nerves for emergencies is to cultivate the art of seasonable relaxation. If you were always suffering vicariously for your friends, you would fail them at the pinch when they needed your services; and human nature being what it is, it is the extreme of absurdity to play the solemn hypocrite. It is an unspeakable benefit of the habit of reading, that unless you are actually staggering under the shock of calamity, you can generally divert the current of the thoughts; and the power of shaking yourself free from the troubles that oppress you is the secret of prolonged vigour and usefulness.

As for the range of readers, of course it is so wide as to defy classification; and it is only possible to glance hastily at a few of the types. The indefatigable students and book-worms who rank the highest in it would elude the casual observer in a railway-carriage. Like the German professor we spoke of, though for a different reason, they are apt to fold their arms and subside into their thoughts. With them system is everything; their favourite subject haunts them like a nightmare; they labour along the path that leads towards their goal; and although they must always be striking aside into side tracks, an aimless digression has no attraction for them. We have had the honour of the acquaintance of more than one gentleman, who, like the worthy father of Pisistratus Caxton, devoted substance and energies to some *magnum opus*. His original incentive might have been the hope of immortality, but he speedily seemed to sink his ambitions in the pleasure of his work. So much the better for him, perhaps, though it might be the worse for the contemporaries he had hoped to en-

lighten. For the incline from earnestness to mania is easy—that is to say, if you have the means for a life of lettered leisure, and have no necessity to work for your bread. One friend whom we have immediately in our eye is a large acred proprietor in England and Scotland. He has moors in the north and pheasant-shooting in the south, with a residence, say, in Park Lane into the bargain. By nature he was of an extraordinarily active disposition; and some twenty years ago, on the twelfth of August, he would be up with the grouse-cock, or rather before him. His keepers adored him, though he looked sharply after them. Now he is the most unimpeachably respectable of men, and is respected accordingly by all who know him. But whatever he may have in store for society, he has ceased to be an ornament or an acquisition to it in the meantime. His charming wife has learned to go her own way; and were it not for her careful maternal surveillance, his sons and daughters might be shooting up anyhow. He makes an admirable host so far, that he leaves all his guests to do exactly as they please; but he is a recluse in his own comfortable house, and an incubus at the head of his well-served dinner-table. If he is sure that you have no tastes in common with him, you cannot do better than accept his hospitality; but if you should have any reputation for letters, you will do well to avoid him like the plague. He has his 'Political History of Europe' on the brain, and when he fancies he has fallen into appreciative company, he never neglects an opportunity of ventilating his views, on the chance of picking up some useful suggestion. The floor and tables of his library are heaped with the books

which it is well for his family that he has the means to purchase; and each volume is interleaved with manuscripts in cryptograph, to which nobody but himself has the key. When he takes his walks abroad, with bended head and his hands behind him, he sees nothing of the bloom in his beautiful flower-gardens; and when he comes up to town for some weeks in the season, to pass his days in the British Museum, he travels with some iron-clamped chests which he regards as the apple of his eye. A full dozen of years of incessant labour have scarcely lifted him over the threshold of his task; and when you retaliate on him with home questions, in the agonies of boredom, he is compelled to avow, with sighs and blushes, that not a chapter as yet is ready for the press.

In his own way, no doubt, he may be happy. But life is short and labour is long; and in the moments when he slips out of the vice that holds him—we do not mean a *double entendre*—he must be troubled with regrets and worried with presentiments. He has ceased to care for his moors or his farms; even his wife and family count for very little with him; and he may go down to his grave in the fulness of respectability, leaving little but loose materials behind him for the monument he fondly hoped to have finished. A far more enviable mortal, in our opinion, is what we may call the practical reader and historian. He must take things quietly if he is to do himself justice; but he cannot afford to loiter and luxuriate over the philosophical speculations that lead to nothing in particular. He has the invaluable spur of the necessity for an income, nor does he care to wait indefinitely for the fame he hopes to attain. We are not speaking, of course, of

the flimsy bookmaker, who crams for his task as a counsel for a case ; but of the man who, following the bent of his genius, gradually imbues his mind with his subjects, enlarging the information and erudition that are perpetually opening fresh sources of interest, and indicating new and curious researches. Though he does his work carefully, he cultivates the knack of getting through it expeditiously ; and experience has taught him where to seek for what he wants without unnecessary waste of time. Reading with the definite intentions which are always present to him, keeps his faculties continually on the stretch ; and when he is not solving problems to his satisfaction, he is following out the speculations that may support his presumptions. In his own province he is as likely to make important and exciting discoveries, as the explorer who strikes into the wilds of a continent, or steers northward to the pole through flocks and icebergs. Nor are these discoveries without an agreeable sense of danger, since he stakes his credit upon conclusions which may possibly be refuted. He can carry his engrossing pursuits into his holiday time ; and arrange his tours abroad with a view to adding to his knowledge. He may appreciate, like other people, the grandeur of the Alps, admire the mosaics of St Mark's, or luxuriate in the galleries of the Louvre. But, when time would otherwise be hanging on his hands, he withdraws from the heat of the day into the cool recesses of some vaulted library, and forgets the hour of the *table d'hôte* while eagerly ransacking its treasures. Imagine the feelings of those fortunate enthusiasts who first explored the manuscripts of Simancas, or the sixteenth-century despatches of the ambassadors of the Venetian Re-

public, in the promise of the breaking light they were to be privileged to throw upon history. To such men the labour that is so often actually a pleasure, must always bring its own reward ; but they have the satisfaction besides of garnering their fame in their lifetime, and knowing that they are being really useful in their generation. By a happy provision of nature, the distinctive cast of their minds is likely to give tone and character to their self-complacency. The gentleman who prides himself on being exact and philosophical, is comparatively indifferent to the charge of being dull ; and as long as he is respected as a safe authority, can afford to be contemptuous as to tricks of style. While the dashing writer revels in his popularity, despising the punctilious and pettifogging accuracy which gives the dryness of *précis* work to what is meant for the many, and checks the easy flow of eloquent narrative. Of all readers of the kind, perhaps those are most to be envied, who, selecting characters and epochs that impress themselves on the fancy, write romance in history and history in romance. As Washington Irving, for example, when he settled with his books in the Alhambra, among the trees and the nightingales, and the murmuring rivulets, under the very shadow of the Vermilion Towers. He could compare the old chroniclers and ballad-makers with the sites they had immortalised in the valley of the Darro, and the passes of the Alpujarras ; and each legend and tradition, as his fancy retouched it, gave him a pretext for some delightful pilgrimage to its scene. He brought himself to live again in the world he reproduced in his tales and history, as he peopled the *huerta* and the hill-country with the Moorish and

Christian cavaliers, of whom many a battle-field and fortress reminded him.

Somewhat in the same style must be the reading of the professional and miscellaneous critic, though it is necessarily more superficial and perfunctory. Not unfrequently he has to discharge an important duty at notice which appears to be absurdly short; and the author whom he sentences in a couple of columns or so, may complain plausibly of the gross unfairness of his treatment. And it does seem hard at the first blush, that the work of years should be judged in an hour or two, and an expert weighed in the balance by a smatterer. In the first place, it cannot be helped; and in the next, the injustice is more apparent than real. The criticisms are probably quite good enough for those who, knowing little or nothing of the subject, may desire to have some general idea of the book; while the very few who may be better informed, take them pretty nearly for what they are worth. If the critic be conscientious, he will try to be fair, and if he understands his business, he will seldom commit himself, and never blunder egregiously. It is not to be expected that he should be an encyclopedia of knowledge, or that he should be deeply read upon all subjects. But he should have made himself master of the practice of "getting up," and ought to know where to lay his hands on the authorities that keep him straight. As for rapid reading, that comes with habit; and it is astonishing what proficiency may be attained in the art. In reviewing a history, for instance, you know that there are certain epochs as to which the main facts are undisputed, while there are others which have little interest for any-

body. There are characters and complications of policy, on the other hand, that have influenced the course of events, and changed the destinies of nations. Each fresh estimate of these must always excite attention, and may be a crucial test besides, of the industry and sagacity of the writer. So the critic learns to read to points; and the points on which he expresses an opinion have really had relatively mature consideration. The same principles help him in the most bulky biography; and with poetry and fiction his task is still easier. Nothing is more easily sampled than poetry, good, bad, or indifferent; and we take it to be an axiom that a really clever novel should engage the attention of the most hardened professional. It does not follow that he need read it page by page,—that is an affair between himself and his conscience. But by attending to a few very simple rules he may make himself master of its faults and its beauties on a comparatively cursory perusal. We should say that he will study the first chapter or two as if he were to be called to pass a *viva voce* examination in them. Having grounded himself in some of the characters, in the opening scenes and incidents of the plot, he will soon find out how far he need persevere. If the novel be a distinctly good one, the chances are, as we said, that he will read on for his own sake, merely skipping when he comes upon what is unmistakably a side episode, or when moralising or sentimentality is being gratuitously overdone. If he does drop the leading thread for a moment, he knows by intuition when he may hope to pick it up again, and makes a scientific cast forward like the huntsman whose hounds are at fault on a cold scent. But he learns,

for his own sake, not to be too impetuous, since nothing is more irritating, when one is reading against time, than to have to try back for the elucidation of some circumstance that puzzles you. And if the critic be something of a literary *gourmand*, there is a great deal of enjoyment in his manner of reading. He is like a man who has the run of a well-furnished cellar with a variety of vintages in innumerable bins,—save that there is no headache to follow, and that the palate is refined by generous indulgence. He has his free swing among books on every conceivable subject, and his mental faculties are stimulated and freshened by changing the themes on which he goes to work. He should necessarily have a fair share of self-confidence ; but at the same time his readers must sometimes feel that an affectation of modesty would sit not unbecomingly on him. We have observed, for example, that the finest speakers among our leading statesmen, especially on platforms and at public dinners, express themselves with a studied diffidence which is sure to be flattering to their hearers. Yet no one doubts on that account that they know as much of their subjects as the traders, professional men, or artisans who listen to them. While it may well be that the gigantic and omniscient intellect in the most dogmatically infallible of our weekly contemporaries, fails to convince us in a few cursory remarks that he has the qualifications for pronouncing authoritatively on the patient labours of years.

We repeat, that the impulsion of inexorable necessity, or of a purpose to be accomplished in some stated time, are what really give a savour to reading. And we are sure that, as a rule, the men who spend most

money on books are those who derive the least enjoyment from them. The man of ample fortune who lays himself out to fill a library, has most likely many other calls upon his time. When he gives *carte blanche* to his bookseller, and has consignment after consignment delivered to him, he has seldom leisure to do more than see them satisfactorily arranged upon his shelves. He aims at completeness before anything — makes a point of laying in the standard authors, “without which no gentleman’s library is complete ;” but it is not to be supposed that he can be omnivorous in his tastes. As for the collectors who go in for rare editions and haunt extraordinary book-sales with their cheque-books in their pockets, for the most part they are bibliomaniacs and nothing more. The exceptions to the rule are the hard-working men who now and then may carry book-buying to extravagance. One of them we know, who is perhaps the safest living authority on matters connected with a taste he has always indulged with discriminating liberality. No trifter he, though he may have a passion for curious editions which is altogether beyond the sympathy of the prosaic and the uninitiated. The most industrious and reliable of historians, he can throw off by way of relaxation and interlude the liveliest of little books ; and has shown himself as much at home in the grand scenery of the Grampians as in those libraries in Great Britain and on the Continent, whither his steps tend irresistibly in his holiday time. We have had the privilege of dropping in upon him in what we might call his lair, if the word did not sound disrespectful. It was in a venerable, half-castellated, ivy-grown manor-house, among avenues of ancient trees, where the

light had first to struggle through the foliage before it fell on the narrow windows, in walls that were many feet in thickness. And seldom, surely, has so rich a collection been stowed away in so strange a suite of rooms. Rooms, indeed, are hardly the word. The central point where the proprietor wrote and studied was a vaulted chamber, and all around was a labyrinth of passages to which you mounted or descended by a step or two; of odd nooks and sombre little corridors, and tiny apartments squeezed aside into corners, and lighted either from the corridor or by a lancet-window or a loophole. The floors were of polished oak or deal; the ceilings of stone or whitewashed; and as to the walls, you could see nothing of them for the panelling of shelves and the backs of the volumes. It was books—books—books—everywhere; the brilliant modern binding of recent works relieving the dull and far more appropriate tints of work-worn leather and time-stained vellum. To the visitor it seemed confusion worse confounded; though wherever his glance happened to fall, he had assurance of the treasures heaped at random around him. But his host carried the clue to the labyrinth in his brain, and could lay his hand on the spur of the moment on the book he happened to want. And with the wonders he had to offer for your admiration, you forgot the flight of time, till you woke up from your abstraction in the enchanted library, to inquire about the manuscript that was in course of publication. So Southey, in the last generation, though he had always to struggle for an income, crammed his little house from cellar to garret with a really noble collection; yet we may be certain that there were very few of

his books which he had not either read or repeatedly consulted. But Southey was a phenomenon of indefatigable industry: perhaps he undertook a greater variety of work than any writer before or since; and he seldom stirred from his Keswick hermitage, and lived before the days of the lending libraries. These lending and circulating libraries have gone far towards altering everything. Nowadays a man who can afford a moderate subscription has such opportunities as the richer of our grandfathers never hoped for; and even students in the humblest ranks of society are generally within reach of some literary institute. Nobody living in London and in a similar position can enjoy again the opportunities of Charles Lamb. With the healthiest and most ravenous of appetites he was always on short allowance; but then, on the rare occasions when he treated himself to a feast, he enjoyed it with a gusto we can hardly figure to ourselves. We see him taking his evening strolls toward the second-hand bookseller's or the book-stall—not the brilliant display of the modern railway station, but such a business-like exhibition of half-worn volumes as is still to be found in the purlieus of Bloomsbury, on the *quais* of the Seine, or the *carrefours* of the Latin Quarter. His affections are in suspense between rival attractions, till apprehension of being anticipated forces him to a selection. In any case, he cannot go far wrong, since he well knows what he has deliberately set his heart upon. And then the cherished book was taken home to be devoured, and it tasted the sweeter for being the fruit of an extravagance. The *blasé* book-buyer who can spend as he pleases, and has the run of libraries that are pretty nearly exhaustive, knows nothing

of the hearty enjoyment that must be taken by fits and starts—as when the intelligent mechanic, who has set his mind on getting on, picks up some second-hand manual cheap, that is full to him of the fairy-tales of science. The matter and the marvels it contains are everything to him, while the style goes for very little; and indeed the more matter-of-fact the contents are, the more are they likely to impress him. For one can never read with such excited attention as when each new fact and marvellous revelation that dawns upon you is a part of education and a stepping-stone to success.

Yet even the sated voluptuary may have his times of enjoyment, should he submit himself for a time to salutary restraint, or try a wholesome regimen of total abstinence. Accident places most men occasionally in circumstances when they cannot afford to be particular, and are grateful for what they can get. Speaking for ourselves, though we are seldom safe from sea-sickness, we do not know that we have ever read with more pleasure than on a long and tedious sea-voyage, when we had rashly trusted to the resources of the ship. The library contained in a couple of tiny shelves on either side of the rudder-case, though “small” enough in all conscience, could hardly be said to be “well-selected.” The purser might have laid it in with the rest of the sea-stores, and it had been supplemented afterwards by waifs and derelicts. A first inspection was eminently disheartening; but when we had found our sea-legs after a sharp bout of illness, we turned to it again with altered feelings. To this hour we have a most affectionate memory of the volumes we read under every variety of circumstances—on the steps of the paddle-boxes, under

the lee of the companion-hatch, bending over the swaying table in the cabin by the light of a swinging-lamp. A queerly-assorted miscellany they were,—three-volume novels, by third-rate writers of the superannuated school of antiquated fashion—magazines that must have blushed unseen through a brief existence, since we never heard of them before or since—biographies of worthy but dry-minded Dissenting divines, whose fame must have been circumscribed in their peculiar communions. We can never hope to have an opportunity of renewing acquaintance with them; and perhaps it is just as well, since we might exchange pleasant recollections for grievous disillusioning. But nothing can rob us of the agreeable recollection of charmed hours spent in their company, when we were only recalled to what was going on around us by some passing ship, or a staggering passenger coming to grief among the crockery. We have made ourself happy of a wet day in the High Alps with some tattered volumes of the Tauchnitz, scarcely caring to regret the missing pages that piqued our curiosity while they gave scope to the imagination. We have soothed the leisure of recovery from sudden illness in a French inn with the loose sheets of a ‘Times,’ and an old copy or two of the ‘Charivari,’ which had served for lining to the drawers of a commode; and though naturally we may have grumbled at the straits to which we were reduced, yet in the retrospect we can only feel remorse for our ingratitude. For we take the normal object of nineteen readers in twenty to be pleasure, improvement being indifferent to them, or but a secondary consideration; and pleasure is most surely begotten of the short commons that make you comparatively

indifferent to the *menu* of your repasts.

The fact is, that with the blunted susceptibilities of later life, short commons are the best substitute for the freshness of intelligent boyhood. What would any veteran of us give to be back again in the days when the whole world of wonders lay before us unexplored; before the senses had become jaded, and while the fancy was still unfagged? Though even then you had strong and decided predilections, and were as fastidious, perhaps, as you have since grown with satiety. The books that were presented for your edification by well-meaning friends were often thrown aside after a glance at the title-page; and you would rather twirl your thumbs through the weariness of a winter evening than settle to what smacked of the school-room in disguise. But when you did come across a volume you liked, it almost reconciled you to inaction on a summer afternoon; and when you found a favourite you stuck to it, with a constant love surpassing that of women. We remember how we read again and again 'Evenings at Home,' Howitt's 'Boy's Country Book,' Harris's 'Wild Sports of Southern Africa,' 'Robinson Crusoe,' 'Gulliver's Travels,' 'Tom Cringle,' and the 'Cruise of the Midge.' Even in those days we picked and chose on vaguely critical principles. Of course we did not appreciate the voyage to Laputa; nor did we care so greatly for Robinson when he had left his island and taken to travelling as a gentleman of independent property; though we warmed to something of the old interest when he fell among the wolves in the passes of the Pyrenees. We hardly needed the pictures to help out our imagination, though they may have assisted us, no doubt, to

more vivid impressions. Yet how well we recollect each line and touch in them; Robinson contemplating the pile of goods he had rafted ashore, with the cat sitting in meditative mind on the top of it; his starting back at the sight of the footprint in the sands, with one of his hands thrown up towards heaven in horror, and each hair in his rough skin cap seeming to bristle. Harris galloping behind the giraffes, or topping the ridge of the valley of elephants; Gulliver with the ladder resting against his thigh, and the Lilliputians climbing over him in companies to take an inventory of the contents of his pockets. Had the memory retained its early tenacity—or rather, if we could command and regulate that intensity of absorption—how different would be the condition of one's mind at this moment, and how infinitely more satisfactory would be the labours of our maturity!

As you may take observations of casual readers in the railway carriages, so you have great opportunities of passing professionals and distinguished amateurs under review in the libraries of the great literary clubs. Whether they have committed themselves to toil for a name and a living—whether they merely ride some hobby hard, or take a comprehensive interest in the literature of the day—all of them are more or less *blasé* in books. The sight of the shelves in the suites of rooms, densely packed from the floor to the ceiling, might send an earnest novice into raptures or despair, according as his introduction to it happened to strike him. But habit is everything, and the bulk of the *habitués* having had the run of similar collections from their youth, live among those treasures as if they did not exist—like the guests sitting down in a grand dining-hall that

has been panelled with carvings of fruit and flowers. They have an agreeable impression that the walls are appropriately adorned, and that is all. Should you happen to want a volume, you apply to the librarian, or go straight to its place, guided by the catalogue. Very possibly it is not once in the year that you take a turn round the cases and the galleries, and then your stroll makes you somewhat melancholy. It is not in human nature not to feel regretful, when you are reminded of the treasures lying always within your reach, and think of the hours you are perpetually wasting. We do not allude merely to those solid works that are associated with effort at all times, and especially as you grow older. Most busy men, even when they are fond of books, like the lightest literature by way of relaxation. But here, in one corner, you come on a collection of the poets, which you feel you have been foolishly in the habit of neglecting. In another are the essays of those graceful writers who delighted you long ago with their wit and wisdom. There are the masterpieces of polished irony, and the speeches of the orators of former generations on subjects that are again become the questions of the day. You are reminded, in short, of the existence of an inexhaustible world of literature, with beauties and interests to please every fancy, which should never grow antiquated or out of fashion, though they may be thrust aside and forgotten. The eager authors of the day may murmur at merits undervalued ; but, in fact, when we look down from the gallery in a collection of the past, on the tables that are strewn with their latest productions, we stand amazed at their extraordinary good fortune. Take the most meritorious

or the vainest of them at their own estimation, and if they were challenged to a fair start and no favour, they might be anywhere or nowhere in the race for attraction with some scores of rivals in their own line and style, unless, indeed, they have something new to say or to report — and that every day becomes more improbable. A man, on lounging into the library, walks instinctively to the tables where the newest books are laid out. A title or a binding strikes his fancy ; he throws himself into the nearest chair, and perseveres as often as not, from sheer listlessness or laziness. He cannot be troubled getting up to change, or striking into a new current of thought ; and then he can break off for a gossip at any moment, without showing or feeling annoyance at the interruption ; for these are gentlemen who seldom seem to read at all, though they can never make themselves comfortable without a book in their hand. One eye may be glancing carelessly at the page, while the other is always ready to sweep the horizon. They prick their ears at the opening of a door or the faintest sound of a foot-fall. With diabolical strategy, they take care to place themselves where they can command one or two entrances — or still better, where they can cut the communications with the magazine tables ; and we need not say that they are horribly dangerous. For there is no possibility of reading within reach of them ; they show a sublime indifference to your most ostentatious airs of abstraction, addressing you *apropos* to nothing on the subjects most foreign to your thoughts. As frequenters of the library and professional smatterers, they are bound to know something about the latest books, but any information they have they gather from reviews.

There are other men who appear to read almost as negligently, and who are almost as indifferent to being disturbed, though not positively aggressive. But these have really the latest literature at their fingers' ends, and it is not very often you find them tripping in their facts. The secret is, that they are most accomplished skimmers, and can pause and pounce almost intuitively on what is the gist of the book or the story. We fancy that their memories, as a rule, are rather quick and flashy than retentive; and yet they accumulate a store of loose information that quickens their intelligence for fresh acquisitions. Then there is the heavy reader, who puzzles out a scent like a sleuth-hound. It matters not what may be the subject of his studies: it may be the profoundest philosophy or the most trivial fiction. He spells out every line in every page, and seems to ponder each phrase as if it were the key to an enigma. Whether his capacity has grasp in proportion to its slowness, is a mystery that is hardly worth solving, even for curiosity; for he thinks and speaks as deliberately as he reads; he has a mania for communicating what he has acquired so laboriously, and it would be the wantonness of foolhardiness to expose yourself to be button-holed by him. Then there is the selfish reader, who is a standing nuisance to his neighbours. He lunches light and early, and hurries up-stairs to secure the most comfortable chair in the snuggest corner. He jerks up his feet on the fender in winter; subsides slowly among the cushions, till a view from behind shows you nothing but a bald crown over the chair-back, and loses all consciousness of external matters till he rouses himself tardily to think about dinner. There is the excited reader, who tears his

way through the books, that appear to put him through the whole gamut of the passions. You see him clutching nervously at the pages as if he would precipitate himself forward and anticipate conclusions; he rolls his eyes, and clenches his fists, and snarls in the concentrated energy of indignation. Or, if he happens to be tickled, he reads with rippling smiles, varied by occasional spasms of approving laughter. And more obnoxious than any, there is the somniferous and stertorous reader, who drops off into sleep at a moment's notice, and presents you with a study of indigestion and suppressed nightmare, till it pleases him to waken with a snort or a chuckle.

Objectionable, though in a very different way, is the critical student who seems to be collating for the purpose of editing some edition. He rather pecks at his authorities than settles to them; he is always making raids all over the place, which are sometimes richly repaid with heavy armfuls of literature, though not unfrequently he comes back empty-handed. He is a man who evidently trusts little to his memory, but loves to note everything in black and white. He sits in a litter of loose sheets, and manages to surround himself in the course of the afternoon with mountainous piles of promiscuous volumes. If his brain can evolve any system from that chaos, his powers of analysis and organisation must be infinitely superior to his memory. Finally, there are the readers whom you cannot help reverencing, were it only for the distinguished reputation they have made for themselves, and the benefits they are bestowing on their contemporaries and posterity. These are the men who, to say nothing of their acknowledged work, are writ-

ing or revising the best part of the articles in the last edition of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica.' Not a few of them are the greatest living authorities in their own especial departments of literature; and it is sad to think what the loss must be of any one of these precious lives, with its rich and varied accumulations. Most of those men of great intellect are model readers. There is no mistaking the expression of close and critical attention, or the power of quick and shrewd concentration. They know what to study and what to reject; but when they read, they read to purpose. Nor can you do better than take example from them as to their methods of application, if you cannot hope to rise to the range of their studies.

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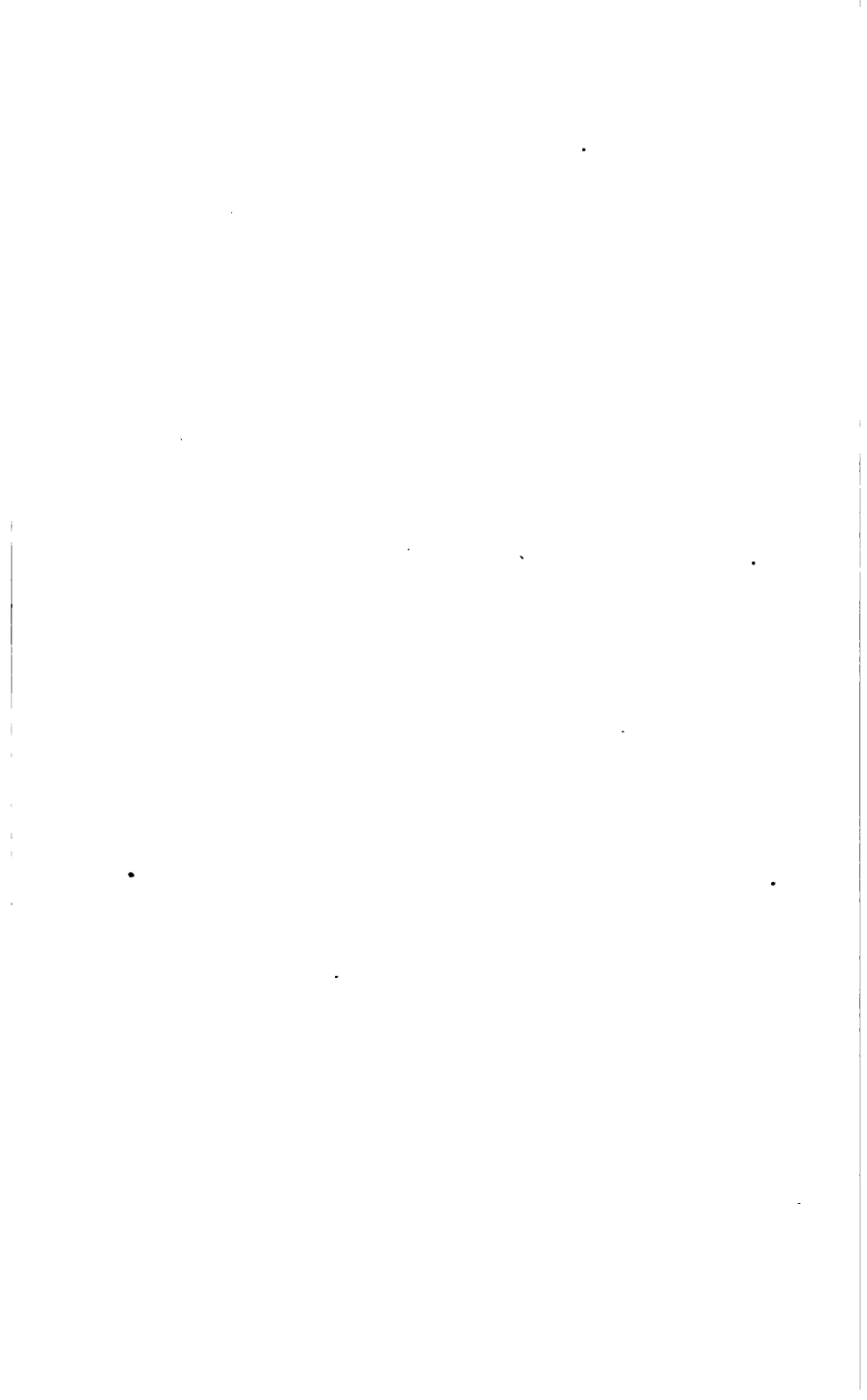
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SYRIA.—PART I.

AMONG THE DRUSES.

THE traveller whose experience of Syria has been confined to its seaboard, and who has been contented to gaze at the snow-clad summits or barren-looking spurs of the Lebanon from the deck of a steamer or the veranda of a Beyrout hotel, can form no conception of the gems of scenery which lie buried in the wildest recesses of the range, and of the peculiar charm which its more remote and inaccessible valleys possess. Even the road which traverses the mountains from Beyrout to Damascus fails to convey any adequate idea of the country which is to be found on either side of it, and which can only be explored by those prepared to encounter the hardships and discomforts which must always attend travel in a region where highways and hotels are unknown. In the first journey which I undertook in the Lebanon these inconveniences were, however, reduced to a minimum, and I was fortunate in visiting one of its most interesting and beautiful districts under auspices

exceptionally favourable. One of the most powerful and well known of the Druse chiefs invited me to pay him a visit; and as he was about to entertain H.M.'s Consul-General for Syria, the latter was so good as to propose that I should form one of his party, an offer which I thankfully accepted.

It was on a hot afternoon last April that we left Beyrout by the Damascus road in two carriages, traversing for a couple of hours the productive and beautiful gardens which surround the city, until we came to the spot where further progress in wheeled vehicles became impossible, and we found our horses waiting to carry us up the steep mountain-path which led to our night-quarters. We wound upwards through groves of olives and mulberries,—through gardens where peaches and apricots were in full bloom, where the fig-trees gave promise of a luscious harvest, where the whole atmosphere was redolent of the delicious odours of orange and lemon trees white

with blossom ; along terraces where grain crops were waving, and the dark green of scattered pine-trees contrasted with the brighter foliage ; across sparkling rills of purest water gushing from the hill-sides, where women were filling their water-jars before nightfall ; while the view of the rich plain we had left, bathed in a sunset haze, grew ever more extended as we mounted higher, and the tints which played over it more exquisitely soft and varied as the rays became more widely diffused.

We were now entering the essentially Druse district of Esh-shuf, which is governed by a Carinakam appointed by the Governor-General of the Lebanon, selected from among the leading Druse families, and who is recognised as the official head of the Druses in the Lebanon. The present occupant of this important position is the Emir Mustapha Ruslan, still a young man, and the head of a family which, if it does not wield the most powerful influence in the Lebanon, enjoys the distinction, where questions of precedence are involved, of ranking above all others by virtue of the title of Emir which is vested in the head of the house—a circumstance which no doubt largely influenced the Governor-General in making the appointment.

We were to pass the night at the residence of this high functionary ; and as we approached the village of Ain Anub, or "Fountain of Palms," in which his house is situated, he came out to meet us riding a handsome Arab gaily caparisoned, and accompanied by about twenty mounted retainers and village notables.

The path was so rocky and narrow that we could only scramble along it in single file ; and as we approached the village, it was bordered with roses and pomegranates. The villagers came out to meet us in the

dusk, standing in a row, and touching the ground in low salutation as we passed, until we pulled up at the archway which formed the entrance to our host's abode—an extensive two-storeyed building, built against the steep hill-side, the flat roofs of the lower apartments forming terraces on which the upper or principal rooms opened. These terraces commanded a wonderful view of coast line and fertile valleys, and of Beyrout itself, with its gardens on one side and sand-hills on the other, stretching out on its promontory seaward.

The reception-room, fitted with divans, was soon filled with a crowd of visitors, consisting of the sheikhs of the neighbouring villages, who had come here to make the Consul-General acquainted with their views in regard to certain questions of internal politics in which they were interested. Ever since the Druse nation was saved from extinction by British intervention and the firmness and skill of Lord Dufferin, they have looked upon the English as their natural protectors and allies. I have met individual Druses travelling in other parts of Syria who, finding I was an Englishman, at once called themselves countrymen ; and they are generally considered, both by Christians and Moslems, to be identified to a peculiar extent with the British—hence the influence of the British Consul, if judiciously wielded, can be all-powerful ; and they naturally come to him as their guide, philosopher, and friend, to expound their grievances if they have any, to make known their wishes, and if there is any internal question or difference of opinion among themselves, to endeavour to enlist him on their side. The matter which on this occasion they came to discuss was evidently one which interested them warmly ; but they approached

it somewhat circuitously, and only after a long preamble consisting chiefly of compliments. Three or four of the principal speakers rang the changes on these for some time, skilfully drawing nearer to the point by degrees, like the sportsman who tries to approach an animal by going round it with constantly diminishing circles, hoping thereby to lull the suspicions of his prey until he has got within shot. With a little practice these Druses would make first-rate diplomats; and I would suggest to the Foreign Office whether, considering how much need there is in that department of the special qualities which the Druses possess in so eminent a degree, it might not be advantageously recruited from this source. Under a bold, frank, manly exterior, they conceal the utmost subtlety and cunning, and have a captivating way of deceiving which quite redeems it from anything base or unworthy. They are indebted to their religion for this art, and from early youth are trained to economise truth, and to dissemble both with Moslem and Christian in respect to their creed. They have one moral standard in their dealings with each other, and another which governs their intercourse with the rest of the world. Dissimulation is recognised by their religion as a laudable acquirement, and the necessity for it has doubtless been forced upon them by the peculiarity of their position. A mere handful of believers in tenets which, if they were generally known, would expose them to attack and persecution, they have learnt to become all things to all men, and even profess a sort of Mohammedanism among Moslems, just as they would with equal readiness profess Christianity did circumstances require it, whilst they were secretly nourishing a supreme contempt for

both religions. They have a proverb which exactly expresses this tendency: "A man's shirt," they say, "does not change the colour of his skin." Hence they can transform the seeming of the outward man with great facility; but it is very difficult to see beneath the shirts and to discover the colour of the moral epidermis. From the extremely bold and independent character of the race, it is probable that were they powerful enough, they would scorn the devices to which an instinct of self-preservation has driven them to resort. Their Jesuitism, not having proselytism for its object, is not so much an inherent trait of their character as a growth upon it, and differs from that of Christians, who practise arts of this description in the name of religion, as the cunning of the wild animal does from that of the poacher, who is setting snares for him. We can excuse, and even admire, the one, while we have no sympathy with the other. Thus a Druse, though he may be as wily as a fox, is the very opposite of a sneak, and his bold eye and open and almost defiant countenance are evidence that he attaches no idea of shame to proficiency in the arts of deception which he practises. Our friends at Ain Anub, when they did get to the point, seemed to think that a great deal was to be done by a constant reiteration of it. After one chief had made his statement, which you felt meant something more than it openly expressed, another one would suddenly seem struck with an entirely new notion, and make identically the same statement in slightly varied language, with the same innuendo at the back of it; and this would go all round the circle, until, out of the slight variations, it dawned upon one what the hidden idea, to which none of them

had given plain utterance, really was. As I listened to them, it occurred to me that these men would not merely do for diplomats, but would make excellent members of Parliament, and even Cabinet Ministers. Their faculty for saying one thing while meaning another, or for meaning more or less than they said as circumstances might require, was equal to anything I ever heard from the Treasury bench, while they possessed that imperturbability of countenance and immobility of expression which so many distinguished parliamentary leaders have vainly struggled to acquire.

I was for some time a most interested listener, and was peculiarly struck by the fine *physique* and proud bearing of many of the sheikhs. They kept hammering away at the same point so much, that latterly I got somewhat bored; but possibly that was the best way of carrying it. The patience of our Consul-General seemed, however, inexhaustible; and as his experience in the mountain has been great, he understood exactly what they were driving at, and they probably obtained as much satisfaction as was deemed desirable. We sat down ten to dinner, which our host served to us in European style, his *chef* evidently being an artist of some pretensions; and our sleeping accommodation was equally civilised. Unfortunately it came on to blow a *khamsein* in the night, and the heat was insufferable—the hot wind whistling through every crevice, and so withering us up, that in the morning we felt disinclined for any exertion, and decided upon postponing our departure till next day. This was a great opportunity for the sheikhs, who came and rehearsed the scene of the evening before over again. The only way to pass the day was to lie and pant in the shade, and look at

the view; but in the afternoon I mustered energy enough to mount my horse and ride up to the village of Shimlan, situated near the top of the range, about 3000 feet above the sea-level, and commanding a still more magnificent prospect. Here one of the largest silk factories in the Lebanon is in full operation, and I was glad of the opportunity of examining the process. Unfortunately, the cocoon, which once gave the Lebanon silk its great superiority, no longer exists, and has been replaced by those introduced from Japan, which are larger in size but inferior in texture to those which have suffered extinction. Still, the silk industry is almost the only one in the province which is flourishing, and is indeed the staple product of the country. Its manufacture furnishes employment to some 6000 hands, to say nothing of the agricultural labour involved in the growth of mulberry-trees, the picking of the leaves, and so forth.

Our road next morning lay across the ridge down into the valley of the Damur, which flows through a wild gorge towards the sea. We now lost sight of the coast, and our gaze wandered instead over the lovely valley beneath us, with villages nestling amid brightly varied foliage, or clinging to the sides of rugged rocks, their flat roofs sometimes supported by pillars and resting on arches, which gave them a peculiar and often elegant appearance. We descended into the gorge by a steep and very bad road, and then crossed the river—which here wildly dashes between overhanging crags—by a picturesque bridge called Jisr el Kadi. We met an old lady on it closely veiled, riding astride on a donkey, who, recognising the leaders of our party, screamed out in a cracked voice, "God bless the Father of the Druses! God bless

England and give her victory!" with many other warm expressions of goodwill. Indeed, I found the Druse women far more eager politicians than Eastern females usually are, and very demonstrative in their way of expressing their sympathies. The hillsides were carpeted with wild flowers, among the most beautiful and conspicuous of which was the cyclamen in various shades, and growing in great abundance. Anemones, asphodel, iris, broom, and many other flowers were in full bloom, and the air was fragrant with scent. Near the river I observed a quantity of myrtle. Clambering up the side of the opposite hill, we soon reached a spring in an olive grove, which had been fixed upon as our mid-day resting-place; and here we enjoyed that delightful hour of repose, the pleasures of which are familiar to every traveller who has ridden much in hot countries. The only drawback to it is that it has an end, and that a moment comes when one has once more to face the sun and the fatigue. We climbed another ridge, and descended upon a valley more thickly populated and richly cultivated than the one we had left—one of the most beautiful, as it is one of the most fertile, districts in the Lebanon. When one has been riding, as I had for some weeks previously, over the barren hills and wretched cultivation of thinly-populated Palestine, it is impossible not to be struck by the contrast which the Lebanon presents, and which points its own moral.

The comparative prosperity which the country enjoys is clearly to be attributed to the administrative concessions which were granted to the Lebanon after the massacres. No doubt the population is more civilised and enterprising than in many other parts of the Turkish Empire, and their industrious habits are largely due to the fact that the

area is so limited, and so thickly peopled, that every foot of land has to be cultivated; but, apart from this, there is a material wellbeing apparent, which is the result of the special privileges which have been granted to the people, and which exempts them from that vexatious interference from Constantinople that paralyses good government in so many of the other provinces of Turkey. The baleful influence of the corrupt centre thus extends to the extremities, and all efforts of the local authorities, however well intended, to reform abuses, are neutralised by the intrigues of those who fatten upon such abuses, and share the plunder which they derive from them with influential politicians at Constantinople. No sooner is this most unhealthy bond of union severed than the province thus disconnected begins to improve. Under the rule of even a tolerably good governor, its industries begin to revive, flagrant abuses no longer protected at headquarters are remedied, and the people, masters to some extent of their own destinies, enjoy a security of life and property to which they have heretofore been strangers, and which encourages their spirit of enterprise. These signs of prosperity were conspicuously apparent as we approached the large town of Der el Kamur, which lays claim to the distinction of being the capital of the Lebanon. It is situated on a steep hillside, but every inch of the slope is terraced and cultivated with vines, mulberries, fig and other fruit trees, and grain. There is not enough corn raised, however, to supply the wants of the population. The town contains from 7000 to 8000 inhabitants, and the houses were superior in construction and architecture generally to anything I had yet seen in the Lebanon. In former days Der el Kamur was a great

Druse centre ; but the Druses were driven out of it at the time of the massacres, and have now established their headquarters at Baaklin, a village six or seven miles distant, and just hidden from view by the ridge of the other side of the valley. Although in the middle of a Druse district, Der el Kamur is almost exclusively Maronite, and was in a great state of ferment on the day of our arrival, for news had just been received of the pardon, under very humiliating conditions, of one of their leading bishops, who had been exiled about a year before by the Governor-General, Rustem Pasha, for intriguing against his Government, and making himself generally obnoxious. As the entire Maronite population in the Lebanon only numbers about 150,000 souls, and as their spiritual welfare is confided to one patriarch, ten bishops, and some 7000 or 8000 monks and priests, it may be readily imagined that the ecclesiastical pot is kept perpetually on the boil, and that a large supply of hot water is always gushing forth from this disproportionately large clerical reservoir. It is an indisputable fact, and one susceptible of verification by any one who likes to take the trouble, that throughout both European and Asiatic Turkey, just in proportion as the clerical element preponderates in a Christian community, whether it be Catholic or Greek, are intrigues rampant, are quarrels instigated, and atrocities perpetrated, where the proportion is so very large as in the Lebanon. Even a massacre becomes possible ; and although upon the last occasion the slaughter recoiled upon those who instigated it, they do not seem to have taken warning. But the old fanatical influences are still at work, and are a source of endless trouble and difficulty to the unfortunate Governor-General, even though,

as in the case of the Lebanon, he must be himself a Christian ; and when he manifests impartiality, he is accused of impiety, while his attempts to control the passions of his fellow-Christians are stigmatised as treachery to a religion which professes to be one of brotherly love.

There has probably never been a governor-general of the Lebanon who has displayed greater firmness, tact, and impartiality than Rustem Pasha, the present occupant of that high office, and he has consequently to struggle against the whole clerical influence of the country. His task is rendered doubly difficult from the fact that the Maronites are under a special French protectorate ; and although the present Government of France is not disposed to exercise its influence in favour of clericalism, the whole Catholic party in France is always ready to espouse the cause of the Maronite priesthood, doubtless from conscientious though mistaken motives ; and this strong sympathy is apt to develop political consequences which call for the exercise of the greatest tact and moderation on the part of the diplomatic agents both of France and England in this quarter. Fortunately, when a healthy understanding exists, as has been the case for some time past, between the Governor-General of the Lebanon and the Consule-General of England and France, these disturbing influences can be controlled, — for the population, when not worked upon by their priests, desire nothing more than to be allowed to live in peace and harmony with their Druse and Moslem neighbours ; and it is wonderful, considering the violence of the passions which were aroused less than twenty years ago, and the scenes of bloodshed to which they gave rise, how much good feeling existed among the peasantry, in spite of the

never-ceasing efforts of their spiritual advisers to destroy it. This arises possibly from the fact that, with an increase of prosperity, the influence of the priesthood is somewhat on the wane; while the unblushing effrontery with which they amass wealth, and drain the country for the maintenance of their ecclesiastical establishments, does not tend to increase their popularity. In Der el Kamur there was a decided clerical and anti-clerical party; and although the clerical party was the strongest—for the residence of the aggrieved bishop was in the immediate neighbourhood of the town, and his local influence was therefore considerable—I was surprised, on conversing on the matter with some of its inhabitants, to find how very decidedly his conduct was condemned, and how warmly the action of the Governor-General was supported.

We were met before entering the town by a mounted deputation, who formed an escort. Among the notables were several who spoke French, and there was altogether an air of civilisation about the place which one hardly expected to find in a remote valley of the Lebanon. A good carriage-road, about two miles long, connects Der el Kamur with the palace of Beteddin, the summer residence of the Governor-General, who, unfortunately for us, was absent on the occasion of our visit. The town and the palace stand facing each other on opposite sides of the valley. Both are about 3000 feet above the level of the sea, and the view of each from the other is strikingly picturesque. The rambling palace of Beteddin is perched on a projecting promontory, and forms an imposing object as one ascends to it from the bottom of the valley. As we clattered up to the gateway we received quite a magnificent reception: two hundred

men—all Lebanon militia, but as well set up and uniformed as any line regiment—were drawn up, and presented arms as we passed into the large outer court, which is at once a parade-ground and principal entrance to the palace; round it are barracks for six hundred men, prisons, the military store departments, and various offices. Passing through a gateway ornamented with frescoes and mosaic work, we enter another court-yard, and here I was strongly reminded of the old palace of the Tartar Khans at Bagtche Serai, in the Crimea. It was surrounded by apartments and galleries, and a fountain played in the middle—indeed there was a wealth of water everywhere throughout the palace; then we passed through still another gateway, more elaborately decorated with carving and Arabesque work, which led us into an inner court. This had formerly been the harem, but the Governor-General had made it his private apartments and reception rooms. Here we were entertained with coffee and sherbet by the officer in command of the troops, and we talked over the politics of the Lebanon past and present, and of the history of the palace, and its builder in particular. As it is little more than fifty years since it was completed, this history does not go very far back, and the influence of the stirring events of which it was the scene still strongly colours the politics of “the Mountain.” The Druses, like the Highlanders of Scotland, with whom they have many national characteristics in common, are essentially feudal, and their history resolves itself into a record of perpetual struggles for supremacy between rival chiefs or heads of clans. During the last century the two most powerful families in the Lebanon were the Shehab and Jumbelât. In those

days it used to be said that the Shehab were the brains, the Jumbelât the purse, and another family, distinguished for its valour in war, the sword of the Druses. The Shehab are said originally to have come from the Hauran in the time of the Crusaders, and to have settled at Hasbeya, on the slopes of Mount Hermon, where they acquired great power and influence. About 200 years ago they moved to this part of the Lebanon, and took an active share in the clan warfare which was continually going on between the principal families. By degrees they acquired an almost paramount influence, and in 1789 the since celebrated Emir Beshir, then chief of the family, was chosen as head Sheikh of the Druses. At this time the authority of the Porte in the Lebanon was little more than nominal, and the Christians were unable to compete in warlike prowess with the Druses, who practically governed the country. As, however, the Druses were constantly fighting among themselves, the Maronites could always make their influence felt by allying themselves with one side or the other; and the Emir Beshir, in order the better to conciliate them, professed to have strong Christian tendencies, and allowed it even to be supposed that he was a thorough Christian at heart. His great rival was the Sheikh Beshir, of the Jumbelât family—a man who, in addition to his great natural gifts, possessed immense wealth, and wielded a corresponding influence. At first the Emir Beshir found it to be for his interest to keep on good terms with his powerful rival, the Sheikh Beshir, waiting for the day to come until his schemes were so far matured, and his power sufficiently consolidated, to take a line of his own. In furtherance of his project, he went to Egypt to seek

the alliance of Ibrahim Pasha; and when this was secured, and he found himself able to defy his rival, the smouldering fire burst forth, and a fierce contest ensued, which was decided on a plain—I afterwards crossed where the final struggle took place—and the Emir Beshir, assisted by the Egyptians, were victorious, and succeeded in capturing the Sheikh Beshir, whom he sent as a prisoner to Acre, where he was strangled, and his property confiscated.

The Egyptians having thus, with the aid of the Emir Beshir, obtained a foothold in the Lebanon, proceeded, in order to secure themselves there, to disarm the Druses; for although the Sheikh Beshir had been conquered, a large party remained faithful to his cause, and vehemently opposed to the allies of the Emir Beshir. In order to keep them in check, Ibrahim Pasha armed the Maronites, while the Turks instigated the Druses to revolt against the Egyptians, and the allies of Turkey supplied them with arms for this purpose. When the final struggle between the Turks and Egyptians culminated in the defeat of the latter, owing to the assistance rendered to the Sultan by England, the Emir Beshir, who had remained faithful to the Egyptians, was captured and sent as a prisoner to Malta in an English man-of-war. After this the Maronites and Druses took to murdering each other, which they continued to do with more or less energy until 1860, when the great massacres took place, and caused that intervention on the part of the Western Powers which resulted in the administrative autonomy of the Lebanon, and in the arrangement which has secured to this once turbulent region twenty years of comparative peace and prosperity. It was in the palmy days of the

Emir Beshir's rule that he built the Palace of Beteddin, which, however, he only occupied for a few years after its completion, and soon after his capture it began to fall into disrepair. His widow had no funds to keep it in order, and it was bought not very long ago by the Turkish Government, and converted into the residence of the Governor-General. The beautiful decorations in some of the rooms prove the Emir Beshir to have been a man of taste. The marble carvings of the wainscotings are most elaborate and highly finished, bordered with Arabesques and mosaic-work; while the ceilings are supported by light, graceful columns. At one end of the garden, cypresses and weeping-wilows indicate the spot where the first wife of the Emir lies buried; and near it is the Turkish bath, all in marble, now out of repair, but equal in decoration to anything of the kind to be found elsewhere. The garden and terraces command a magnificent view of the broad winding valley, clothed with wood or terraced with vineyards. The extensive stables under the palace would afford luxurious accommodation for a whole cavalry regiment, though at present they are only occupied by about fifty dragoons. All the military accoutrements are home made; and I saw some tailors actively at work on sewing-machines in the store department, which also contained the arms and ammunition for the force. It was a pleasure to be in a country where life and property are protected by the people themselves. The hateful Kurdish Zaptieh and lawless Bashi-Bazouk are here unknown. All the mounted police are furnished by the Lebanon itself, are properly paid, and kept in strict discipline by the present Governor-General. The taxes are so very much too light that the Lebanon is

a financial burden to the Posat. The method of their collection is regulated by the conditions of "the settlements" arrived at after the massacres; the people are thus spared the infliction of the two curses of Turkish rule—the foreign policeman and the tax-gatherer.

On the top of the ridge behind Beteddin lies the small plain upon which the battle between the Emir Beshir and the Skeikh Beshir was fought. Here we were met by a deputation of horsemen from Mukhtara, led by the young Sheikh Nejib Jumbelât, the eldest grandson of the Sheikh Beshir, and consequently the head of the family. He was a good-looking young man, mounted on a handsome Arab gorgeously caparisoned, but he apologised for the steeds of his retainers, as he said the best horses at this season of the year were all out at grass. This, however, did not prevent one of them from executing an equestrian "fantasia" on the battle plain, to the great admiration of the rest of the company, as he was celebrated for his skill in horsemanship. Dashing forward at full gallop, he made his long lance whirl rapidly round the neck of his horse and his own body, till it spun like a Catherine wheel; then he twisted it with surprising rapidity round his own neck; then made it spin sideways, first on his right side and then on his left, keeping his horse meanwhile in full career, while both hands were more or less engaged in performing these feats with the lance, which he only once dropped in an effort to surpass himself. Some of these men are extremely expert in playing the *jereed*, and the game sometimes waxes earnest as hard knocks are given and received, but unfortunately they were not sufficiently well mounted to exhibit their skill and prowess on this occasion.

days, we now descended into another, and if possible more richly cultivated, valley than either of those we had already traversed, and the view from the top of the ridge before we commenced the descent was so striking as to compel a halt. At our feet, embedded in foliage and situated on the angle of a bold promontory, formed by the confluence of the two streams Awati and Kharabeh, stood the Palace of Mukhtara, more imposing for situation, and more picturesque in its architecture than even Beteddin. Away to the right, its pointed crest, streaked with snow, towering among the clouds to a height of 6100 feet, rose the lofty Tomat Niha; and on the plateau, about half-way up the mountain, lay the town of Yezzin. It is situated on the edge of a cliff, over which the stream which supplies the town with water precipitates itself in a fall of 150 feet. We could see the thin white streak in the distance as it foamed down to join the Awati. This river, which is the ancient Bostrenus, falls into the sea about a mile to the north of Sidon. At its confluence with the Yezzin brook stand four columns of Egyptian granite, four feet thick and thirteen feet high, probably Phœnician. The main range of the Lebanon, averaging from 5000 to 6000 feet in height, dotted here and there with stumps of fir or cedar, but otherwise rugged and barren, closed the prospect immediately in front of us. The whole view was gloriously illuminated by the setting sun; and the tinted roofs and white balconies of Mukhtara, crowded with spectators in anticipation of our arrival, with its tributary villages nestling amid luxuriant foliage, gave an air of comfort and civilisation to the scene, which contrasted most agreeably with the desolate-looking range behind. After a short and steep de-

scent we reached the village of Yedeideh, where the whole population turned out and lined the roadside, welcoming us with low salutations; and then from the opposite side of the valley burst upon our ears the strange wild cadence of hundreds of voices chanting the song of welcome. Plunging down into the gorge, thickly wooded with oaks, poplars, and chestnut trees, we crossed the rushing torrent by a picturesque bridge; but its roar failed to deaden the chorus which was now approaching, as groups of men, singing and clapping their hands frantically, came crowding down to welcome us. As we wound up the zigzag path leading to the palace the scene became more and more dramatic in its effects. First heralding us with their triumphant shouts, as with the agility of mountaineers they sprung up the steep hillside, went the footmen. Then came the cavalcade with sword and spear and flowing robes of bright colours; and now groups of women in white veils, with only one eye exposed, came trooping down the village paths, to swell the procession and add their shrill greetings. When the piercing *zalghoob* burst from some hundreds of female throats for the first time, one's immediate impression is that all the women in the place are being beaten by their husbands, for it ends in a kind of wail, hardly expressive of joy or triumph; but it acts upon the nerves of the men as the pibroch of a bagpipe does upon a Highlander, only, doubtless, far more effectively; and, indeed, these Druses are accustomed to be stimulated very much, not merely by the voices, but by the eye of beauty. It is true it is only one eye—a Druse woman never shows more than one eye—but probably from the fact that the rest of the face has to be judged by

this single orb, they throw more expression into it than the Western female can concentrate in two; at all events, these Druse women certainly do play a very much more active part in affairs generally than women who hide their faces do elsewhere. No sooner did they set up their shrill screams than the men began to sing more madly, and clap their hands and fire off guns more wildly: as we passed beneath latticed windows more women looked out, and sprinkled rose-water over us, and made long shrill speeches to us, which I could not understand, but which I am told consisted of blessings and praises; and a boy came and poured coffee under our horses' feet as a special mark of honour and respect;—and so at last, half stunned with noise, we arrived under the lofty walls of Mukhtara. Built against the steep hill, it has a façade five storeys high, with curious projecting stone staircases, ascending from one storey to the other on the outside, and a terrace and fountains on the fourth storey, where light graceful columns support the blue-domed roofs, and where a large crowd was now gathered, while the women were clustered like flies upon the balconies and stairs. Here we were met by the second brother, Nessib Bey, and conducted up to the terrace, where all the most distinguished neighbours were gathered, and where we were shown our sleeping apartments, and the preparations which had been made for our accommodation. On two sides of the large quadrangular terrace were reception and dining rooms; in the centre of each was a fountain of the clearest water. On the third side were the sleeping apartments; while the fourth was open, and from its lofty elevation commanded a splendid view of the wild yet fertile valley. This court was surrounded by light columns, and in the centre

of it was another fountain. We sat down to dinner, a party of fourteen. Besides the two brothers Jumbelât were several of the principal family retainers, and the spiritual chief of the Druses. To me this was the most interesting personage present;—a man of not more than forty years of age, he is looked up to by the whole nation for his sagacity and personal piety. He was a silent, reserved man, of unusually dark complexion, a thoughtful brow, and extremely soft eye and gentle expression. There was a dignified repose of manner, a perfect self-possession, and, withal, a keenness of intelligence in his bearing which were well calculated to impose respect. Although he had been only recently appointed to fill the important position he occupied, he had already won golden opinions; and the fact that he owed his nomination chiefly to the influence of our own Consul-General illustrates in a striking manner the exceptional position which England occupies among the Druses. When the occupant of this high office enjoys the respect and esteem of the nation, his authority among them becomes almost paramount; and it is important, therefore, that his personal relations with the chief British political authority should be of a cordial nature. Though enjoying the highest consideration among the chief families of the Druses, it is not necessary that their religious head should be himself noble; on the contrary, this man's father, who had wielded immense influence in the same capacity, was of humble origin. He was universally beloved and regretted, having recently died at a great age. So far as I could judge, his son seemed likely to prove a most worthy successor. Though the appointments of the dinner-table were European, the

repast itself was thoroughly characteristic. After soup came a whole sheep, stuffed with rice and seeds from the cone of the pine (it had been boiled in *leben*, or sour milk); then there was *couscousou*, or stuffed cucumbers; then egg-plant; also *farci*, with other preparations of meat and vegetables—all very palatable—and an excellent pudding. I observed that the sweet part of the repast seemed the most popular among the natives, who possessed a great capacity for disposing of it. After dinner came toasts, and the healths of the Queen and the Consul-General, and prosperity to the family of Jumbelât was drunk. The wife of the eldest son was at the moment in an interesting condition, and the hopes of the family were centred on the result. She had already had six children—four girls and two boys; but both the boys had died, and the family was without an heir. The anxiety of the whole neighbourhood was intense on the subject. I therefore ventured to propose as a toast the health of the lady, and as I did not see that there was any reason why one should not drink to the health of a child not yet born, I coupled with it that of the infant. Perhaps it was somewhat premature to anticipate the sex, but I felt that the exigencies of the occasion required it,—and so we drank to the future son and heir. I am happy to say that we were fully justified in so doing by the result. When we went back into the courtyard we found that it was brilliantly illuminated with coloured lanterns. The neighbouring villages had responded to the display, and numerous lights twinkled among the foliage on the hillsides; while bonfires were lighted on their summits, to which we replied with a display of rockets.

Some more notables had arrived

during dinner, and we found that a sort of *levée* was still to be held before we could seek repose. Over coffee and *narghilés* we listened to their professions of devotion to England and to the Jumbelât family. They were profuse in their expressions of esteem for Mr Eldridge, our Consul-General, and gratitude to him for the protection he had accorded, and the benefits he had been able to confer upon the house of Jumbelât; and they seemed most anxious to impress upon me, as a stranger, the great power and influence in the Lebanon of my hosts. Indeed, the Jumbelâtes appear to occupy among the Druses very much the same position that the MacCallum More did in old time among the clans in the Highlands, and, like the Campbells, they have their rivals and enemies, and lose no occasion to strengthen themselves politically. They enjoy the special protection of England ever since Lord Dufferin rescued the family from beggary and ruin. The two brothers were then children; the once magnificent property of their grandfather, the Sheikh Beshir, had, as I have already described, been confiscated; and after the massacres, the family seemed in a fair way to become altogether extinguished, when our High Commissioner took compassion upon them, and succeeded in recovering some of their property, placing the lads under the special guardianship of the Consul-General. From that time their affairs have been managed, and the young men themselves have been brought up, more or less under British supervision. They are now once more one of the wealthiest, if not the wealthiest, family in the Lebanon; and as they feel they owe it all to England, their devotion and gratitude are unbounded, and this sentiment extends naturally throughout the whole district, in which their in-

fluence is supreme. This accounts for the extreme cordiality of our reception, and for the warm demonstrations of goodwill of which we were the objects. In an interesting conversation which I had with the spiritual chief, he assured me that the Druses of the Hauran, together with those of the Lebanon, were one in sentiment; that they all acknowledged him as their religious superior; that in the Hauran they were as devoted to England as they are in the Lebanon, and that at any moment that the Queen gave the word, they were ready to turn out 25,000 fighting men who would go to war for her in any cause. The Druses in the Hauran are emigrants from the Lebanon, and went there because there was not room enough in the mountain for the whole Druse nation, as well as for the Maronites. They are about equal in numbers to those who remained, with whom they keep up a pretty constant communication. The day may come when it may be well to remember that we have a warlike people in Syria absolutely devoted to us, and only longing to prove that devotion in acts. No doubt they believe that they would derive ultimate advantage from a cordial co-operation with England. All alliances are, in fact, based on this anticipation; but there are degrees of loyalty and degrees of fighting capacity, and England may look far before she would find a recruiting ground which could furnish so brave and loyal a contingent as the country of the Druses. So firmly are they penetrated with the closeness of their relations to England, that I was surprised to find how many knew a little English, that language being the only foreign tongue they ever learn. The brothers Jumbelât spoke and wrote it with ease.

The family now own about twenty villages, and can put into

the field from five to six thousand fighting men. I was astonished to learn that about half their tenants and retainers were Christians. They were not to be distinguished from Druses except by the absence of the white turban, and joined in the manifestations of joy as heartily as the Druses themselves. One of the brothers told me that they were careful to make no distinction between Christians and Druses in their treatment of them—that they all lived most harmoniously together; and certainly, so far as demonstration went, the popularity of the family seemed unbounded among their own followers, whether Druse or Christian.

After the *levée* was over, the mother of our hosts came to pay us a visit. Indeed she was really our hostess, and controlled the affairs of the family. To her tact and ability, aided by British assistance, is largely due the restoration of its fallen fortunes; and it was easy to perceive, after a few moments' conversation, that she was by no means an ordinary person. She was dressed in Druse costume, cut away exceedingly in front—her ample bosom concealed by a gauze undergarment, and on her head a veil, one corner of which she held before her mouth, but evidently more from habit than from any real desire to conceal her features, her age and long intimacy with the Consul-General rendering her somewhat indifferent in this respect. In her expressions of welcome and solicitude about our comfort, she did the honours as one accustomed to rule, and was *grande dame au bout des ongles*.

After the fatigue and excitement of so long a day, I was not sorry when at last the moment came for retiring to rest, though, as it turned out, that rest was destined to be of short duration; for about two

o'clock in the morning I was awoke by a shrill scream, apparently from a room in the immediate neighbourhood, which made me start in alarm lest some dreadful catastrophe had occurred. It was followed by another and another, and in a moment I recognised that it was the *zalg-hoobs*. I at once inferred that the expected event had occurred, and that it was a boy! Not for the birth of any female infant would the Druse women have set up such a scream of rejoicing: a girl indeed would have been considered a profound misfortune, and the congratulations which we were prepared to shower upon the head of the happy father would in that case have been converted into condolences. It was evident there was to be no more sleep for any one that night—such a bustle, and a hurrying to and fro, and shrill screaming went on until dawn, when enthusiastic clansmen began firing off guns under the young mother's window, just at the moment when she most needed quiet. So as sleep was no longer possible, I rose with the first peep of day, to see how the birth of a young Druse chief was celebrated in the heart of the Lebanon. To the left of the terrace, and thirty or forty feet below it, was a court through which flowed a stream of sparkling water into a square cistern, near which stood two or three handsome trees. The roofs of the buildings which enclosed this court were crowded even at this early hour with women, who were looking down and screaming their applause at the picturesque groups as they came trooping in, firing their guns and waving them in the air, to join in the dance of triumph. In the centre of the court the crowd had formed a circle, and in the midst of it danced a lithe active figure in bright attire, who, waving his drawn sword in one hand and the scabbard in the

other, was performing a sort of war-dance to the music of loud singing and clapping of hands, accompanied by squalling pipes, and drums made after the fashion of Indian tom-toms. Every now and then men rushed out of the crowd and fired their guns into the tank. Sometimes the volleys poured into the water literally lashed it into foam. What with the loud chanting, the discordant music, the perpetual firing, the clapping of hands, and the screaming of women, the clamour became almost deafening. All this time, as the more distant villages sent in their contingents, each led by its headman, the crowd kept increasing and the hubbub waxing louder. More circles were formed, in some of which two performers danced and went through a sort of mock combat, changing their step and the measure of their sword-cuts with the time of the music, which itself changed as village poets arrived and circulated scraps of paper on which were written songs appropriate to the occasion. Seated on the ground as spectators were the Ukkul or "initiated." The Druse is always to be distinguished by the white turban wound round his tarboosh or fez; but the learned in the mysteries of their religion wear, in addition to this, an *abeih* or wide-sleeved cloak with black and white stripes. They were too grave and reverend signors to take any more active part in the festivities than that of silent and approving spectators. They abstain from excesses of any kind, never taste wine or tobacco, and preserve a severe and sedate deportment upon all occasions. Indeed, all the Druse men are distinguished for their abstemiousness and moderation, as their women are remarkable for their virtue; and although upon this occasion the festivities were kept up until the evening, and must have been participated in by about

two thousand persons of both sexes, there was no unseemly boisterousness or excess of any kind, or, so far as I know, was any beverage stronger than coffee provided by the munificent hosts who had during the day to feed this immense crowd. Mutton and rice were the staple articles of diet, and I am afraid to say how many sheep were killed and how much rice was consumed. After the novelty of the scene had worn off, it must be admitted that the dancing became somewhat monotonous, and the noise wearisome and confusing. I thought of the poor sick woman in whose honour it was all done, and contrasted these deafening demonstrations with the straw-strewn street which insures quiet to the London fashionable patient under similar circumstances.

Once the performances were varied by a sort of burlesque, and a group of men and women, preceded by capering men fantastically dressed, and performing on pipes and drums, appeared. Some of the men were disguised as women,—one especially represented a bride, and another a decrepid old hag. The latter, nearly bent double, carried a basket and a knife, while from her forehead projected the Druse horn—a part of female attire which has now entirely fallen into disuse. She was supposed to be an allegorical representation of “the past;” “the present” was symbolised by the handsome young bride, who, attended by one of her maidens,—also a youth in girl’s attire,—proceeded to execute a fantasia not unlike a nautch-dance in the middle of the group, while the old woman kept getting in the way, digging up roots with her knife and putting them in her basket, performing various sly antics all the while, and keeping the spectators in a high state of merriment, the more especially when she and a man dressed as a buffoon had a passage of arms in which the

latter got decidedly the worst of it. The women, who were looking on from the balconies of the palace and the neighbouring roofs, seemed especially to enjoy the fun, and in their excitement occasionally afforded me a glimpse of the other eye. Indeed, I had more than once an opportunity of seeing a remarkably pretty face; but as a rule the Druse women veil their beauty more jealously than Turkish women, while in other respects they seem to take a far more active share in the affairs of life, and to enjoy a considerable amount of independence. On the other hand, divorce consists in the simple formality of a man saying to his wife that she had better go back to her mother. After this has been repeated three times, she has nothing for it but to return to the bosom of her family—a custom which it is evident must serve as a wholesome check upon mothers-in-law. Considering the great facility of the operation, it is much to the credit of the Druses that divorce among them is not so common as it would be if they were English, and had to apply to a judge for it.

In the eyes of our venerable hostess and her two sons our visit seemed quite an auspicious event: it had served as a sort of signal for the appearance of the long-wished-for son and heir. In consequence of the confidence with which I had proposed his health the night before, I think I was suspected of having exercised some sort of occult influence, and enjoyed a corresponding amount of consideration. At all events, I had the privilege of seeing not only the old lady and heaping upon her my congratulations, but a young married daughter, who was dressed in European costume, and whose veil was not too thick or jealously worn to conceal her fair features.

I tried, later on in the day, to get my friend, the spiritual chief, into a quiet corner, and converse

with him on the subject of religion. But I found the one task as hopeless as the other. The noise penetrated everywhere, but the holy man was impenetrable, and skilfully evaded all approach to the mysterious topic, so I was forced to have recourse to other and, doubtless, far more trustworthy sources of information;—for I could only have accepted with a reservation what he chose to communicate, whereas since 1860 the tenets of the Druses are known to all who take the trouble to investigate them, and in spite of their denials of dogmas, some of which they know would give dire offence both to Christians and Moslems, they are too firmly established in their sacred books, which were obtained during the massacres, to admit of a doubt. The founder of the sect was one of the Fatimite Khalifs of Egypt, so called on account of their pretended descent from Fatima, the wife of Ali and daughter of Mohammed. The Fatimite Khalifs were Ismailians, or followers of Ismail, the son of Jaafar the Just, the sixth Imaum, who died A.D. 765, leaving Moussa, his second son, as his heir and successor,—Ismail, the eldest son, having predeceased him; but many of the Sheiks refused to recognise Moussa, declaring that the Imaumat could only pass to the eldest son. Moussa was finally assassinated in A.D. 799 by the Khalif Haroun al Raschid. The Druses, the Ismailians (or Assassins during the time of the Crusades), and the Ansaryieh, are all followers of Ismail; but it was not till two hundred years after his death that the Druses became a distinct sect. At that time, or at the close of the tenth century, there reigned in Egypt a certain Khalif called Hakim the Strong, who declared himself to be an incarnation of the invisible Imaum, and to be as God upon the earth. His pre-

tensions were supported by a Persian emigrant then in Cairo, named Mohammed Ben Ismail; indeed, they were inspired by him, and were afterwards adopted by a man of remarkable ability, a certain Hamza-ibn-Ali, surnamed Al-Hadi, or the director, who allegorised the Koran, and was the chief author of their sacred books. One of his disciples, also a Persian, named Durzi, came into Syria, and established himself on the western slopes of Mount Hermon, near Hasbeya, where his doctrines were at once accepted by the inhabitants, who carried them to their comrades in the Lebanon, who were thenceforward known as Druses, or followers of Durzi. He was afterwards excommunicated, and enjoys no credit among the Druses, though his name still remains; but Solomon, another Persian who followed him to Syria, and became a teacher among them, is still held in much honour.

The nation or tribe, whichever it may have been, that accepted the doctrines of Hakim, had not long previously arrived from the north of Syria, chiefly from the Jebel-el-Ala, near Aleppo, where some still remained, and a quarter of the city is actually called to this day the Haus Jumbelât, after the family with whom I was now staying. Hakim, the founder of the sect, whose cruelty and ferocity amounted to insanity, was finally murdered by his subjects, whom his crimes had driven to desperation. According to the Druses, however, who deny his notoriously bad character, he did not die, but was translated, and his soul went to China, whither it has since been followed by the souls of all pious Druses, who are supposed to be occupying in large numbers certain cities in the west of China; and preparing for the great event which the Druses believe to be now impending. Ac-

cording to the prophecies of their learned men, Hakim was to return in about nine hundred years from the date of his translation, so that he may be expected at any moment, but the precise date will be determined by the final collision between the Christian and Moslem religions. When Jerusalem and Mecca are both threatened, and the religions of the East and West are finally arrayed against each other,—about the time of Armageddon, in fact,—Hakim will appear at the head of an army of four millions of Chinamen, who have all been Druses, which will be divided into four wings, and will be led by the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, respectively; while Hakim, mounted on a white ass, will ride into Mecca, and waving his sword, Islam will crumble to pieces. The same fate will befall Christendom, and a Druse kingdom will be set up in Syria and Egypt, to which the rest of the world will be subject. Those who are not Druses will be no better than donkeys and mules. In consequence, however, of the close ties which bind England and the Druse nation together, and of the enlightenment in Druse estimation of one religious sect in England, an exception is to be made in their favour. English Unitarians will find themselves on that day on a footing of perfect religious equality with the Druses, and, indeed, will be considered as holding the same views as themselves. The whole British nation will be allowed more or less to benefit from this circumstance, and will enjoy the special favour of Hakim. The Druses do not like to be called by that name, but call themselves Muwahadeen, or Unitarians; but the great difference between them and other Ismailian sects is the divine authority they attribute to Hakim. During

the whole period of their existence as an independent nation or sect, extending over an epoch of nearly a thousand years, the Druses have only produced one man of real celebrity. This was the Emir Fakr-ed-din, who ruled over the Lebanon in the early part of the seventeenth century. This remarkable man annexed Beyrout and Sidon, threatened Damascus, and extended his sway as far as the Lake of Tiberias and Mount Carmel, where some Druse villages which I have visited still exist. He was finally captured by the Turks near Yezzin, brought to Constantinople, and decapitated. Another very singular personality among the Druses was a princess of the house of Ruslan, who last century governed most successfully a part of the Lebanon. She heard and judged cases, sitting behind a curtain, and her decisions gave great satisfaction. This circumstance furnishes a striking illustration of the exceptional position which women occupy among the Druses: many of them acquire a great reputation for their learning in religious matters, are initiated into the sacred mysteries, and are allowed to take part in the secret *séances* of the Ukkul. These are held once a-week in small square-domed buildings, which may be seen plentifully scattered over the hillsides. They are called *khalwets*, and will accommodate at most thirty or forty persons. In these their sacred books are kept, and hither in the evening the initiated resort to discuss the recondite points of their theology. There was one just under the house in which we stayed at Ain Anub, and at nightfall I watched for the flicker of a light, and listened for the strains of a hymn—for they sing a millennial anthem, chanting the advent of Hakim and his armies from China, and their triumph over Moslem and Christian unbelievers; but though

it was the night of their meeting, neither light nor sound issued from the mysterious little building. Their religion goes back to the First Cause, to the great dual principles of masculine and feminine, of light and darkness, of good and evil, and of the incarnations which have from time to time appeared upon the earth embodying these principles. It is too involved and metaphysical to attempt any analysis of it here, and it is easy to understand how it should furnish endless topics of speculation and controversy to the Ukkul in their *khalwets*.

Here also they discuss politics and the interests of the nation. They have secret signs of recognition, and are in fact organised as a powerful political as well as religious secret society. This organisation they have already once turned to formidable account, and it may be that they are yet destined to play an important part in the destinies of the country. As brave as they are subtle, skilled in the use of firearms, with a spirit of independence which has never brooked oppression, and which the Turkish Government has sought rather to conciliate than to control, loyal to their friends and merciless to their foes, nothing but their inferiority in point of numbers has prevented them from exercising a supreme influence in Syria.

In physique the Druses have nothing in common with the Bedouin Arabs, from whom they are supposed by some to be descended; while others, with far more reason so far as their stature is concerned, consider them to be the modern representatives of the ancient house of Amalek. Polygamy does not exist among them; and as I have before remarked, they are exceedingly jealous and strict in their relations with women. It is doubtless owing to the fact that Druses

do not indulge in a plurality of wives, that woman exercises so much more influence in the family than in polygamous countries. Although so carefully veiled, there are no harems in the Turkish sense, and the windows of my bed-room opened on a yard surrounded by kitchens and offices always crowded with busy, active, and talkative women, doubly fussy in consequence of the important event which had taken place, and evidently controlling matters to their hearts' content. I could even pass through the midst of them without causing that consternation and general stampede which would have been the case had they been Turkish women. In my walks abroad this was still more strikingly the case: instead of that shrinking, cringing manner which the Moslem female thinks fit to exhibit in the presence of a stranger of the other sex—who in fact feels guilty of an impropriety if he dares so much as to address her—the Druse woman boldly talks to him from behind her veil, daringly, and yet not immodestly, “fixing” him with her one eye, and evidently much too proud to be a victim to bashfulness or timidity. Strolling alone through the village in the afternoon, to get away from the noise and see a little of the surrounding country, I came upon many groups of females, all in holiday attire, talking and laughing merrily, who, when they saw me, gave a scream of welcome, and then in most winning tones showered blessings upon my country and myself. Now and then one would come forward and present a rosebud, so that I had quite a little bouquet before I had gone very far. They seemed far more anxious to conceal their faces than the upper part of their persons, which the peculiar cut of their costume somewhat lavishly displayed. I soon got

clear of the houses and followed a steep path down to a roaring brook, embowered in foliage, which, later in the day, I ascended to a most enchanting spot, where it tumbled over the rocks from a height of some thirty feet into a cool grotto, which I found was a favourite picnic resort of the Jumbelâts, and where a clear pool formed a tempting bath. Climbing up the steep hill on the other side, amid magnificent chestnut trees, I came to a spot from which there was a good view of the palace, with its tall cypress and chestnut trees standing boldly out on the shoulder of the hill, and I sat down to sketch it, but was soon surrounded by a group of villagers returning from the *fête*, who would not hear of my going back until I had paid a visit to their village, which turned out to be nearly an hour distant. I was amply repaid, however, by the extreme beauty of the walk, and the hospitality of the reception which I received. They took me to the house of the old sheikh, who was very ill, and, I fear, will never rise from the bed upon which he nevertheless insisted upon receiving me. Here I was regaled with coffee and lemonade, the room soon becoming full of guests; and we made the most laughable struggles to understand each other, the eternal friendship of the English and the Druses being the theme upon which our conversation centred,—for any attempt to get beyond compliments and expressions of mutual admiration ended in confusion. Here, too, the women came to the doors, and both they and their husbands insisted that I should keep on paying visits, which, as it would have involved an endless absorption of coffee, I was obliged to decline; but I went up to the flat roof of the highest house and revelled in the glorious prospect. This was

the village of Ain Matur, celebrated, as I afterwards heard, for the turbulence and independence of its inhabitants. On more than one occasion, it would seem, they had acquired an unenviable notoriety. But I can only speak of them as I found them; and if I experienced at last some difficulty in making my escape, it was from nothing more dangerous than hospitality.

Altogether, Mukhtara and its neighbourhood possessed so much fascination, that it was with regret I found myself unable to accept the invitation of my kind hosts, and prolong my stay over another day. I was obliged to leave the rest of the party here, and push on by myself to Damascus. The route I proposed to take was one very little traversed, and it was necessary to find a guide in the village who knew it. I can imagine no more delightful headquarters for excursions than Mukhtara. Not only does the scenery possess a special charm of its own, but ruins, all of more or less antiquarian interest, are scattered over the country; and the remains of ancient art lie buried among the beauties of nature.

Our last evening was spent in comparative calm. The villagers, exhausted with their exertions, had gone home; the young mother and child were doing well, in spite of all they had gone through; and considering how little rest we had any of us enjoyed for the last thirty-six hours, there was a general disposition to retire early. As I intended to start before my hosts were up, I took a cordial leave of them, and not long after sunrise on the following morning found myself alone *en route*, with Mukhtara, now silent, behind me, and before me the towering peaks of the Lebanon, across which lay my day's journey.

REATA; OR, WHAT'S IN A NAME.—PART VI.

CHAPTER XX.—VICTORY OR DEFEAT?

"I governed men by change, and so I swayed
All moods. . . .

I made
The ever-shifting currents of the blood
According to my humour ebb and flow."

—TENNYSON.

At a little past eleven the *Mazur* was going on. This is, as everybody knows, the Polish national dance. The couples were passing down the room, the men fronting towards their partners, clicking their heels loudly together, the ladies moving with that swift, gliding step, which has got measure but no rule; the easiest thing in the world, you would think, to look at it, but with an infinity of little touches and graces to which only a Polish woman can do justice. Eminently an affected dance, you cannot dance it well without affectation; and that is, perhaps, why no other nation can imitate it with success, for Polish ladies are the most gracefully affected. Everybody was not dancing the *Mazur* now, but Comtesse Halka was. Comtesse Halka was dancing the *Mazur* to perfection—she always danced it to perfection; she and Kreislich, who was her partner, were the best *Mazur* dancers in the room. Everybody who was not dancing was watching these two. Otto, who had now come into the ball-room, and stood in the doorway, was watching them also. His temper was still in a ruffled state; he had been stung in his most vulnerable point—his vanity—and the sudden resolution he had come to was nothing but the determination to give the lie to those ridiculous reports, of which he had got the first inkling to-night. Of course it was no end of a bore, to have to put

himself out of his way on account of such miserable gossip, and of course he would not dance, just stay an hour or so, and let people see that he had no reason for fearing or avoiding Comtesse Halka and her family; and also, although he did not quite acknowledge this to himself, to let people see that the proud Comtesse, who had the name of being so unapproachable, was more ready to let herself be approached by him than by his rival. Because he was doing a thing which went against his inclination, he thought he was acting judiciously. He felt rather virtuous than otherwise, and a good deal ill-used; and he looked ill-used too—every feature of his face expressed it. Nevertheless, as he stood leaning against the doorway with folded arms, he was the handsomest man in the room, although just at that moment he did not happen to remember it.

The *Mazur* was interminable, as *Mazurs* always are, and Comtesse Halka was indefatigable in it to-day, contrary to her wont. Generally she would go round the room two or three times, and after having been swung round a few times in the *holubiec* or quick part, would declare she had enough of it, and be taken back to her place. In fact she was far from an *enragée* dancer at any time. It was not every one who could persuade her to valse—she took care to make herself precious about it; and the

consequence was, that whoever succeeded in obtaining one of her rarely-given *jours*, considered that he had achieved a triumph, and was proportionately envied. But to-night it seemed as if she would never grow weary; as long as the *Mazur* music went on, she continued dancing. Kreislich was in the seventh heaven of delight, and wondered what made the Comtesse so agreeable to-night. Otto was provoked, and wondered whether the Comtesse saw him. It would almost seem as if she had not; she never looked towards him, although twice her yellow train had swept right over his feet: and yet a tall hussar standing in the doorway was not a thing to be easily overlooked. Otto began to wish that the *Mazur* would come to an end—to be tired of his position, and impatient to make his next move. There was something in Halka's appearance to-night that was peculiarly gratifying to his artistic perceptions, with the colour of her hair melting into the colour of her dress, and every step and movement so perfectly cultivated. He would not have minded watching her dance for another half-hour, but he felt aware that his position was one which might become ridiculous, and the slightest suspicion of ridicule was a thing which he could not stand under any circumstances. At last the everlasting *Mazur* came to an end—a few more long-drawn notes, and the breathless dancers escorted their partners back to their seats.

"I have not enjoyed a *Mazur* so much for long," said Comtesse Halka to Kreislich, as she walked across the room on his arm. She was one of those people who never lose breath and never look hot; the motion which had made most of the other ladies grow scarlet and purple, had left her, in her cool

palleness, perhaps even a shade paler than she had been. Kreislich did not by any means belong to this class of people, and his complexion had grown several shades darker from what it was before the *Mazur*.

"I am so delighted to hear you say so, Comtesse," replied Kreislich, roused out of his usual drawl, and appropriating the remark as a personal compliment. "As for me, I could have gone on dancing for ever; but the room is rather hot. Will you not let me fan you a little?"

"That is my office," put in Langenfeld, taking possession of the fan; "Kreislich has been absorbing you for the last hour, and now he looks more in need of being fanned himself. He is not very refreshing to look at—is he, Comtesse?"

Perhaps the Captain felt the truth of this remark, or perhaps the glasses of beer, glimpses of which he had caught in the distance, were the real bait, which caused him to move off in the direction of the outer room. Comtesse Halka did not want fanning in the least, but she had given a sort of passive consent, and sank down languidly in her chair, which faced the door, while Langenfeld stood over her.

"I told them they would overheat the room," he said presently, as with Halka's white ivory fan he began making a vigorous whirlwind which blew about the stray locks of her hair and the petals of her tea-roses; "but the baker who had the charge of decorating the apartment thought that everybody is accustomed to live in an oven like himself."

Comtesse Halka laughed, a very slight laugh of course—it was not in her nature to laugh loud; but Langenfeld thought he must have been saying something good. "How

absurd of him!" she began, and then broke off, for Otto was standing before her.

"Good evening, Comtesse." If he felt any nervousness he did not show it; his manner was the perfection of gentlemanly self-confidence.

"Good evening, Baron Bodenbach"—she returned his bow slightly but readily; there was nothing remarkable in her physiognomy except that her eyebrows were drawn up a little with an almost imperceptible shade of surprise.

"Well, Bodenbach, this is what I call being fashionable," cried Langenfeld playfully; "and after I have been driven to dance *vis-à-vis* to Schweiner too!"

Otto said something about unavoidable delays and unexpected obstacles, and looked haughty.

"You have not finished telling me about the baker," said Comtesse Halka, turning to Langenfeld; apparently she took no interest either in the delays or the obstacles which Otto had encountered. Langenfeld was surprised at the interest displayed towards the baker, but flattered on his own account. Otto felt disgusted with the baker, and annoyed with both the Comtesse and Langenfeld; also a little provoked with himself. What had he come here for if he was to be snubbed?—his absence not felt, his presence disregarded. Even had he wished, he could not draw back now. He might still have done so while he stood in the doorway; now it was too late. Everybody was looking their way—or he thought they were, which came to the same; and he would not stand being put so quietly on one side before them all.

The old Countess was sitting next her daughter, and he addressed his conversation to her, quietly waiting for his opportunity. It came almost immediately; for Comtesse

Halka having mentioned that she was thirsty, Langenfeld rushed off in headlong haste to procure a glass of water.

"May I be allowed to inherit the office of fanning?" he said, moving slightly nearer to her and taking up the ivory fan, which Langenfeld had put down on the chair alongside.

"No, thank you, I am quite cool now; in fact, I don't think I ever was hot."

Otto did not put down the fan though; he kept it in his hand. "Perhaps you will get hot later, and then you will allow me to fan you." This remark was rather an assertion than a question.

"Perhaps, if you are still inclined to do so."

"Can you doubt it, Comtesse?" was the natural answer, prompted by gallantry. She did not think the subject worth pursuing.

"The ball is rather pleasant to-night; I don't remember seeing such a good one at Rzeszów for a long time. We were thirty-two pairs at the first quadrille, were we not?" looking at him questioningly. "Oh, you were not there yet, I think, by the by."

"I only made up my mind late to come."

"The time has passed so quick to-night, I never would have believed it was so late if Langenfeld had not told me so."

Otto frowned; this was not what he had expected. He thought that he would only have to put out his hand for what he wanted, and now it seemed it would cost him some trouble; but he would have it nevertheless. There was a vacant chair near her; he sat down on it and played with the fan.

"I have been away a long time this summer," he remarked, wanting to lead away from the subject of the ball.

"And you have come back, I

suppose, more disgusted than ever with this country? I know you always disliked it."

"Well, every country must lose by comparison, when one comes from the tropics."

"You have been in some of those parts, have you not? Brazil was it, or California?"

"Mexico," replied Otto, a little piqued.

"Oh, Mexico!" echoed Comtesse Halka, who had known that perfectly well before; "a very interesting country—you must tell me about it some time later," she added, speaking in a perfectly uninterested tone of voice, as if it was nothing to her what Otto had done or left undone in Mexico; "then no wonder that you find Poland unbearable."

"But really, Comtesse, I never said that I found Poland unbearable."

"Oh, didn't you?" languidly.

"Some Polish things are very bearable, in fact. For instance, the pleasure of seeing a *Mazur* danced to perfection is an enjoyment you can only have in Poland. I don't think I should ever grow tired of watching it."

"Yes, you looked very patient standing in the doorway."

"Then she did see me," reflected Otto. "And you seemed to be enjoying your *Mazur* very much."

"I was enjoying it very much. Captain Kreislich dances so well, and our steps happen to suit so perfectly."

"Apparently you are easy to suit, Comtesse; for last winter you were kind enough to say that my step suited yours perfectly."

"Did I? But that is so long ago, you know, I quite forget what your dancing is like; and perhaps you have forgotten it over there in Brazil—or—Mexico. Please, Baron Bodenbach, don't break my fan; the ivory is not very thick," for by

this time Otto was working about the fan violently, opening and shutting it with some symptoms of excitement.

"Yes, perhaps I have forgotten it," he said, a little fiercely. "And it wouldn't much matter either, as I have given up dancing—at least, I am certainly not going to dance to-night."

"I think you are quite right," said Halka, with almost, for her, some *empressment* in her manner. "The rooms are so hot, and there are so many dancers—so many good dancers—already, that it is not likely you would be called upon." And yet inwardly Comtesse Halka had decided not only that Otto should dance, but should dance with her.

"You are seeing everything *couleur de rose* to-night, Comtesse; the Fire-Brigade should be excessively flattered."

"Do you see Monsieur Trottelinski?" she asked, indicating some one at the other end of the room. "And do you remember what an *enragé* dancer he used to be last winter? He has given it up also because he is growing too stout."

Whether the *also* was to be applied to the stoutness or to the dancing was not clear, but something in the tone irritated Otto. He knew perfectly that he did not incline to stoutness as yet, and that he had come back from Mexico if anything thinner than when he went out; it was senseless of him, but he could not suppress a feeling of mortification. For a moment he thought he would cut short the whole matter by abandoning Comtesse Halka and leaving the ball abruptly; but that would be to confess himself vanquished, and he would be more disgraced than if he never had come to the ball.

"Did you not dance at all while you were in—Mexico?" A tiny

pause before the Mexico, as if by an effort her memory had at last mastered the name of the country.

"No, I have not danced a step since the Ice Ball last winter; that was a good ball."

"Not better than this one to-night; the floor is certainly better polished, and I think I had to go away early at the Ice Ball. Mamma was tired. I think it was even before the *cotillon*," she added, reflectively.

"I know it was before the *cotillon*, for I was to have had the pleasure of dancing it with you, Comtesse. Do you not remember?"

"I remember something of the sort."

"And who is to be the happy man to-night?" And Otto, as he spoke, opened the leaves of the little ivory book which was tied on to the fan. Comtesse Halka was engaged in arranging the flowers in front of her dress, and perhaps had not heard him. "My name, Comtesse? And in my writing? What does this mean?"

"Oh, is your name there still? I had quite forgotten."

"But how has it come there?"

"You put it yourself."

"So I see; but when? I know you had these tablets last winter."

"And they have not been used since last winter—not since the Ice Ball."

"But surely you have danced since then?"

"Oh yes; but I don't always make my partners write themselves down—only when I am in fear of forgetting them. You had better strike out that."

"My name?"

"Yes, naturally."

"And what name shall I put instead? Kreislich?" with a rather disagreeable inflection of voice at the end.

"Yes, Captain Kreislich; it pro-

bably will be him, I think—he is my usual partner. Ah! there he is coming himself," for at that moment the Captain and Langenfeld re-entered the ball-room.

Otto glanced at Kreislich and then at Halka, and bit his lip. Why need she look pleased? Very likely it was only the glass of fresh water which Langenfeld carried that she was waiting for anxiously; but Otto chose to view the matter in a different light.

"And supposing I refuse to strike out my name?" he said hurriedly.

There was no answer. Up to this moment she had decidedly held the upper hand in the conversation. Her woman's *finesse* had carried her thus far successfully. Now the tables turned, or seemed to turn.

"Have you promised Kreislich the *cotillon*?" He looked up from the leaves of the ivory book straight at her; for a second she met his eyes, and he saw that into hers there had come a sudden softening, and then she looked away.

"No, I only gave him a half promise."

Had it not been for that look, or had he taken a moment to reflect, Otto would probably not have gone further; but, alas! it was so easy—so fatally easy for him—to do the thing he was doing. When a man tastes the fascination of his own power, he must be strong indeed to resist it.

"Then my name can remain?" His eyes were still on her face. Kreislich had almost reached them by this time.

"But you are not dancing," she said, faintly.

"If you wish me to do so, that is enough reason for changing my mind," he answered, very low.

"Here is the water, Comtesse," said Langenfeld, panting. "You have got no notion what difficulty

I had in obtaining it. I rushed about in despair, and was beginning to think seriously of raising an alarm of fire in order to see where the gallant brigadesmen had concealed their water-buckets," and here Langenfeld laughed heartily, and looked for the Comtesse to laugh also, remembering what success he had had with the baker a little while ago; but he was disappointed. Halka merely swallowed a little of the water and put down the glass.

"What are you studying that book for so earnestly, Bodenbach?" said Kreislich. "By the by, Comtesse, may I consider the *cotillon* settled? You will surely not carry out your threat of going away sooner?"

Halka hesitated; she had not come to any definite conclusion with Otto.

Otto looked up from the tablets which he had apparently been examining with minute attention, and said coolly—

"I am sorry to disturb your arrangements, Kreislich; but I have discovered that the Comtesse owes me a *cotillon* since last winter, and I have claimed my rights."

It was a bold move—one which, with any but such a thorough *connoisseur* of women, might have led to failure; but Otto knew exactly how far he could go: that last glance of Halka's had been a surrender. He knew now that she was ready to give him even more than he was inclined to ask for.

"I must really beg your pardon, Captain Kreislich; but, you see, old debts have to be paid off first."

For a few seconds the Captain had stood silent, fairly taken aback by this audacious movement: but

his features were not quick to express his emotions; and although Otto's sharp eye exultingly detected the slightly heightened flush on his forehead, to a general observer there was nothing in his appearance to show that he was beaten.

"Just as you please, Comtesse," he drawled, with a stiff bow; "a lady's decision is, of course, unsailable." Then in a tone of perfect indifference, and sweeping Otto with a distant look, he added, "It is very hard upon me, of course."

"Not at all," replied Otto, still with that same cool ring of triumph in his voice; "you have no right to complain after that interminable *Mazur*." There was a valse striking up at that moment: Langenfeld dashed off in search of a partner; and the Captain, making a virtue of necessity, moved off for the same purpose.

"I suppose you are rested now," said Otto, rising and closing the ivory tablets. "May I ask for this *tour*?" * And the next moment his arm was round her waist, and they were swinging round the room to the quick music of the waltz.

It is a widely acknowledged fact that Austrians belong to the best dancers in the world; and Otto, as a dancer, was a perfect type of his nation,—quick, light, and yet firm as a rock; dashing, and yet free from the ridiculous extravagances with which so many good dancers spoil their own dancing. No trippings, no entanglements, no concussions; without seeming to look out, he steered clear, by skilful turns, of every obstacle in his way. In the doorway, where Otto had stood, were now standing those two infantry officers whose con-

* In Austria, ladies do not engage themselves for the round dances; they dance them in separate *tours* or turns, just as they are asked. Only the *cotillon* and quadrilles are engaged dances.

versation he had overheard, and to whom he owed a special grudge; and as he whirled close past, he threw them one withering glance—he could afford to despise their miserable chatter now!

What was he doing? where would this lead? He never stopped to reflect; no thought of prudence, no foreshadowing of consequences, oppressed him. His blood was coursing fast with excitement and with dancing, his senses were all in a whirl. The present moment was one of enjoyment, and further than its enjoyment he did not look. He had gained a triumph by extinguishing Kreislich, and by showing the Rzeszów world on what a footing he could place himself with the Comtesse, if he chose—a triumph he should be ashamed of, rather than proud; but he felt no shame now—only a little surprise at himself, and at what he had done. When he had come to the ball-room there had been no fixed plan in his mind—he had set himself no definite limits; but now he had drifted further than his intention could have lain, further than was wise, and still he had no wish to stop.

A good many people had watched during that talk between Otto and the Comtesse. When he rose to ask for the *tour*, the sensation of curiosity had increased; and when the Comtesse had risen also without hesitation—she who, as a rule, was so difficult to persuade—the interest deepened greatly.

"Do you see them?" said old Boradembksi to the Colonel's wife, rubbing his hands delightedly. "It is all right; just what I guessed—a lover's quarrel, and nothing more. A fine pair they make, and a pair they will be before the year is out!"

It was the last waltz before supper, and everybody was dancing fast and furiously; Langenfeld, the

fastest and most furious of any, was flying about from one lady to the other with indefatigable zeal. His dancing had as many *nuances* as a peacock's tail. After having flung the bookbinder's daughter into her seat at the end of an extravagantly stormy *tour*, he would go round the room with the most correct sobriety with Amelie Forney, the daughter of his Colonel; and then, having released her, he would familiarly chuck over his arm the long hanging blond plaits of Fräulein Bast, the notary's daughter, and start off on another dangerously reckless expedition. Schweiner, the red-faced lieutenant, had taken up his place in the doorway beside the sacristan; it was one of his *blasé* days, and he was not dancing, contenting himself with criticising the company through his single eyeglass of preternatural size.

The music came to an end, and was encouraged to resume; everybody who had not been dancing before, felt themselves irresistibly drawn into the general vortex. The apothecary, the chief and lankiest of the Fire-Brigadesmen, was seeking to emulate Langenfeld's mode of dancing; but, having shorter practice and longer legs, was tripping up people right and left, and greatly incommoding everybody, himself and his partners foremost.

Schweiner suddenly dropped his *blasé rôle*, and precipitated himself into the crowd. The little bookbinder, fired on by the desire to distinguish himself, had got hold of a lady who presented the appearance of a formless mass of purple silk, and was courageously towing her round the room.

The music came to an end for the second time, and now the dancers were too much exhausted to resist. Langenfeld, who was just beginning a new turn, made

one more attempt to induce the music to recommence, but human nature could do no more. Reaction set in—there was a general throwing over of wraps, and a universal rush to the supper-room.

The best table had been reserved for the Colonel's family, Comtesse Halka and her mother joining them as the only people of their acquaintance. Otto was also of the party, having given the Comtesse his arm for going in to supper, and he now sat down by her side.

"You may fan me now, Baron Bodenbach," said Halka to Otto; "this room is stifling me," and she pushed her fan towards him, and leant back in her chair with half-closed eyes, looking interestingly worn out, while Otto acquitted himself of his duty with readiness and ease. A very few minutes revived Halka; she was too experienced ever to fall into the fatal mistake of overtaxing a gentleman's services. Otto required more delicate handling than most men, and to-night she was in a critical position towards him, and she knew it. She had long since got over that one weak moment, which had served her end so well, and had regained possession of all her senses. Too much coldness might discourage Otto, but too much warmth would certainly alarm him; and the first necessity was that he should not be alarmed—not be allowed to see whither he was drifting.

Halka had gained her point so far; he had put himself publicly, conspicuously, by her side. It was by wounding his vanity that she had reached this end; but now that it was reached, his vanity was to be smoothed down again, and delicately unruffled. Let him be soothed and quieted,—let him remain in the belief that it is she who has surrendered to him, not he to her.

Her manner at supper was regulated and modelled by this idea. Taking care not to confine herself to conversation with Otto, she spoke across the table to Madame Fornay, the Colonel's wife; she put in her remarks to the general talk that was going on, but always with words between to Otto, just enough to let him feel that they were on a pleasant amicable footing, but no more. He got no more soft glances like that one in the ball-room. Every allusion to the *cotillon* was steered clear of, not the faintest hint was breathed which might remind him of his broken resolution. No suspicion of his own inconsequence was to disturb him as yet. How many women overshoot their own mark by their too great eagerness to grasp their prize, by their pride in parading their captives!

Otto, as was natural, and as she had expected, grew more assiduous in his attentions in proportion as she seemed to ask less from him. It had always been his privilege last winter to fan the Comtesse at supper, and he slipped back into the habit naturally—he slipped back naturally into all his habits of last winter; it came so easily, it was so much pleasanter to do it than to leave it undone. It was all so exactly like last year; the noisy crowded room with the frantic waiters, the same people, the same clouds of tobacco-smoke, the same pattern on the walls, the same hideously-formed lamps; and amongst all these vulgar surroundings, Halka the one piece of perfect refinement and grace, the one figure on which an artist's eye could rest with satisfaction. It almost seemed to Otto that he had never been away, it was all so exactly the same.

Not a very attractive picture this of a supper-room, and you will per-

haps wonder that people used to better things should care to take amusement in this shape. This is all very well to say, you inhabitants of civilised parts of civilised countries, accustomed to mimic waterfalls and palm-groves, and the sweet scent of flowers wherewith to refresh yourselves during your ball-suppers—you who would turn sick and faint at the bare idea of tobacco-smoke in a supper-room. It is easy enough for you to talk—you are not condemned to pass ten or twenty years of your life away from all the amenities and refinements of the world. Here, if you do not choose to take amusement in the only shape in which it is offered, you must do without it altogether; and if you are wise, you will not hold out for impossible luxuries either of society or of surroundings, but will put your pride in your pocket and make the best of things as you find them. After all, it can do you no great harm; for of course a ball of this kind does not involve you into any acquaintance with, or even acknowledgment of, the presence of people you do not care to know. You make up your own set of quadrilles, and your own party for supper, and are quite as independent as at a theatre or concert.

Towards three o'clock, the *cotillon* was nearing its end—the figures had all been gone through, the men had been tormented and made use of in every way that ingenuity could devise. They had been made to jump over hurdles like race-horses, and through hoops like performing poodles; driven four-in-hand round the room; had been looked at in mirrors, and disdainfully rejected or graciously chosen, as the case might be; had had cushions pulled away from under their knees; had been blindfolded, made to wear ugly paper cocked-hats; they had been viewed as

ninepins to be knocked down, as targets to be shot at, as fish to be angled for; finally, as reward for their pains, had been stuck over by their fair partners with bright rosettes of penny ribbon, and had returned the compliment by presenting them with hideous little bouquets of dyed-straw flowers.

There was no denying it, the ball was very animated, and everybody was satisfied with the *cotillon*. Now the final *galop* was being wound up with crackers, and the dancers were putting out their last energies for the last effort. Here there had been no expense spared—the Fire-Brigade had laid out ten florins in crackers. This had been the grand *coup* of the evening, planned by the leader as the most appropriate finishing up to the Fire-Brigade ball. There were crackers in all directions; each gentleman got a handful, and cracked them with the ladies he wished to dance with; and in the background, to swell the noise, explosive pellets were used abundantly. The two youngest waiters (those who usually beat the drums) stood at the entrance, flinging down handfuls of the little bombs—one doing his duty with an expression of funereal gravity, the other with a self-satisfied simper on his face.

In the middle of the deafening row, Boradembski came up to where Otto was standing beside Halka's vacant chair, the Comtesse having gone off on one of the cracker tours with Langenfeld.

Boradembski was chuckling, and held his hands behind his back.

"What do you think I have got here, young man?" he asked, with a broad grin on his good old face.

"I really cannot form a conjecture; probably some more of those crackers. There seems to be no end of them to-night."

"Something much more precious than crackers—to you, at least."

"I don't think I have lost either my watch or my purse," said Otto, and he felt his pockets.

"Something much more precious than watches or purses," went on the old man, with his eyes twinkling.

"Then I can't guess," answered Otto, with a vague feeling of anxiety lest he should have had a letter of Reata's about him, and have lost it.

"It is a flower!"

"All right," said Otto, much relieved; "but that has nothing to do with me."

"A rose!"

"I am delighted to hear it, but it is not my affair."

"A tea-rose! There now, young man, is not that your affair?"

"Oh, the Comtesse has lost a flower," answered Otto, rather coolly. "You had better give it to me, and I will return it to her; she must be back directly."

"Return it to her!" exclaimed Boradembaki, in accents of real horror. "You don't mean to say that you would be fool enough to give it back? Think of the lucky chance that has favoured you! I see the rose getting hurled about by the trains of the dancers, kicked about by their feet, and at the peril of my life I pursue it, pounce upon it, and bring it you here, and you talk of giving it back! In my day, a young man would have ridden a hundred miles to procure such a treasure. We knew better than to give back flowers when we found them. Why, I remember wearing a whole wreath of forget-me-nots next my heart for several months, and very uncomfortable they were, too. I can't understand what the young men of the present day are made of; this generation has got no energy, no spirit, no——"

Otto attempted to interrupt him.

"Oh, I know what you want to say; don't tell me. You are shy, you are afraid that the Comtesse will think it a liberty. Never fear, I will arrange it all for you; there she is coming," and before Otto could stop him, Boradembaki, in perfect innocence of the mischief he was making, and verily believing that he was doing Otto a service, was petitioning for the rose in his name.

"Here is somebody, Comtesse, who is too timid to ask for what he wants; he is dying for leave to keep this rose—do not be cruel."

"Oh, that old flower," said Halka, with indifference. "I never missed it, and it is far too crushed to put on again."

"Then he may have it?"

"Any one may have it who likes, it is not worth keeping."

Otto stood by uncertain as to what he should do, and feeling more than inclined to solve the question by throwing the rose at Boradembaki's head. To take it would be to go further than he had dreamt of, but to refuse it would now be an insult. What can a man do under such circumstances, unless he be very strong-minded or very regardless of appearances, or has enough presence of mind to turn the matter off lightly? Otto's usual presence of mind utterly failed him at this crisis; he could see no way of escape before him, and no course but that of yielding.

"There now, my son," said the incorrigible old man, holding out the tea-rose to Otto; "take it and be grateful to me, and stick it into your gold cording—it will look charming there."

Otto took the rose, and bowed silently to the Comtesse as he fastened it into the front of his *Attila*; but his expression did not look much like that of a triumphant lover—more like the face of a man defeated.

Perhaps Comtesse Halka guessed at the reason of his frown; it was not in her plan that Otto should appear to be entrapped into anything, so she hastened to speak:—

"I have not yet given you one of those rosettes, Baron Bodenbach, have I? and I have got none remaining, so that old flower must do as well, *faute de mieux*. Oh those dreadful crackers, I wish they would stop!"

"My dear," Madame Fornay was saying to her daughter, "I think we will go away immediately after this; it is getting too uproarious, and high time to go, for the sacristan is beginning to dance!"

"Yes, some of the *pas* are already verging on the *Cancan*," remarked the Colonel, "and it is nearly four o'clock."

At last, rather to everybody's relief, the crackers and the music simultaneously ceased, a great pause took place, the *cotillon* was over. Otto was still standing beside the Comtesse's chair; he saw all the pairs beginning to promenade about the room, and mechanically he offered her his arm, and followed their example. He had not quite recovered his ill-temper at having the rose forced on him, and it was easier to walk about than to stand still and be stared at. But he was stared at for all that; and it was small blame to the Rzeszółów world if, seeing the Comtesse on his arm and the tea-rose in his button-hole, it unanimously came to one conclusion. There could be no two opinions on the matter.

"Bodenbach is going it in a dashing manner," remarked the Colonel to his wife as they walked back home. Everybody walked home at Rzeszółów on similar occasions, there being no more object in keeping the dresses fresh, and certainly no object in keeping the carriage-horses (if you happen to have a carriage and horses) waiting indefinitely in the night air.

"Do you think he is quite serious?" asked Madame Fornay, who was a keen-sighted woman.

"Bless your heart, what more do you want? Never leaving her side the whole evening; fanning her at supper; her partner at the *cotillon*; going about with one of her roses in his button-hole; and I heard him promising to go out to the *chasse* at Snyhinice next week. Of course he must be serious."

At the same time, Otto was reaching his room by the cold grey morning light which dispels so many of the night's illusions; a small drizzling rain had begun to fall. Piotr had forgotten to put wood in the stove, and the room was depressingly chilly. He banged the door shut, and then with a gesture of disgust tore the tea-rose from his button-hole and flung it to the ground. "Vile, faded thing! miserable fool that I am!" he cried out, pursuing the unfortunate flower and crushing it with his foot into a formless mass. In two hours he would have to be at the riding-school;—only two hours to recover from the pleasures or harassments of the night!

CHAPTER XXI.—EVASIVE.

An evasion Ollendorfan.

Q. What paper have you?

A. (*evasive*) I have the thread stocking.

—FUNCH'S Pocket-book for 1878.

For the next few days the small drizzling rain continued,—the most depressing of all weather, the one which most makes us long for some change, for some excitement—for anything to break the grey, damp, chilly monotony of that falling wet; the weather which, of all others, has the most lowering influence on the human mind, which has probably provoked most suicides—for there are natures on which these conditions of weather have an influence incredible to others. The brooding care, the gnawing anxiety, which a sunshiny day lightens and relieves, on a day like this becomes an unbearable weight, pressing them down with a leaden hand until they grasp at means—desperate means, if no others are at hand—to escape from the dreariness which they can no longer bear. And if the weather have the power to influence us in great things, then how much more, with what greater force, does it make itself felt in regulating our mind through the lesser occurrences of life? Yes, a continued drizzle is the most depressing of weathers. A downright steady pour is not much better, perhaps, but at least it *is* downright and honest, and means something; a storm is enlivening; a high wind is inspiriting; frost and snow, provided you can escape from their direct influences, are rather satisfactory—they will make you better appreciate your home comforts: but there is nothing satisfactory about a drizzle.

Everybody felt the depressing influence of this particular drizzle at Rzeszów, some more and some

less, and each one showed their depression in his or her particular manner. Schweiner's depression took the form of sacrificing his chief ornament; he shaved off his beautiful golden whiskers, feeling that any change, even a change for the worse, would be welcome,—to see a different reflection in his looking-glass, even an uglier one, was pleasant by way of variety.

Otto watched the weather every day from his window, and grumbled at it every day on his way to the riding-school or to his dinner, as he trudged over the sloppy *Place* and attempted to dodge the heavy drops that came dripping off the roofs on to his head. After the excitement he had gone through during the last half-year, the sort of life he led now was to him no more than stagnation. The first proud delight in his correspondence with Reata had begun to wear off (he had written again after the ball, but without making any allusion to it). There was now not even the exciting prospect of her coming, to enliven him, for had he not consented to the delay which wisdom dictated? There were moments when he almost repented of that step, and half wished that the time of disclosure were come; but again he shrank from it, and was glad of the respite. He must have time for reflection, he thought; about what, was not very clear even to himself. Reflection could hardly alter his position much; but he knew that his position was not a common one, and he had an undefined idea in his mind that thinking about it might

do some good. But it must be noted that he did in no wise act up to this principle; on the contrary, he gave himself as little time for thought as possible—grasping at every opportunity which seemed to promise diversion. He was in a thoroughly dissatisfied mood with himself and his surroundings.

He could not make up his mind whether he would go to the *chasse* at Snyhinice or not. He half hoped, half feared, that some obstacle would come in the way; that it would be put off on account of the weather. He would have liked something to decide the question for him, without his having to come to a resolution himself. Every evening he said to himself that it was an awful bore—that he wished he never had accepted the invitation; and every morning he looked out of the window anxiously to see if the weather was not going to clear up, so as to make the *chasse* possible.

"It is the last time I shall ever go out to Snyhinice, certainly," he repeated often; "I would not go at all if I could help it."

However, when the day came, he could think of no rational excuse for staying away; it would not do, he thought, to shirk it merely on account of the weather. So he went out to Snyhinice, and returned more dissatisfied with himself than ever.

It was on one of these drizzly afternoons, a few days later, that Otto was visited by Lieutenant Farkas, the heavy looking young man of whom mention has been made before. The Lieutenant was in trouble, and had been making the round of his comrades, trying to extract a grain of comfort for his woes from each in turn. He was now on his way from Langenfeld, whose light-hearted mood had baffled all hopes of sympathy. "At all events, Bodenbach won't aggra-

vate me with his cheerfulness," he thought, as he turned in at Otto's door; "he has looked glum enough himself lately." Otto was not alone; two of his other comrades had just turned in, in hopes of killing an hour of the wet afternoon. To these three listeners the Lieutenant retailed his narrative of troubles, which of course were of a pecuniary nature, involving present difficulties with Jews, and unpleasant prospects.

"The worst of it is, that they won't be satisfied with my word alone—they know me too well; and if nobody will stand good for me, the thing will be brought before the Colonel."

"Come, come," put in Schweiner, "you know we would all do our best for you; but I don't suppose our word would be much more worth than yours. We are all *arme Teufel*, like yourself."

This talk was uncongenial to Otto; he got up and walked towards the window, to see from what direction the sound of carriage-wheels was coming. The heavy young man followed him wistfully with his eyes. "I suppose it would be no use, Bodenbach, asking you to pledge your word for me? I fancy you must be rather in the same boat as myself."

The other two looked towards Otto with some expectation; quite in the dark as they were to his present position, they felt curious for his answer. Otto did not turn from the window; the carriage came in sight. It was a showy little turn-out, a high-wheeled trap, and two quick-stepping greys dashing at a great pace through the mud. There was an air of comfort in every detail of the little equipage, and the same was reflected on the face of Captain Kreislich as he held the ribbons tightly grasped, seeking to restrain the ardour of his horses.

"What capital-stepping greys!" remarked Schweiner, admiringly.

"Lucky fellow," muttered the other lieutenant.

"There will be nothing for it but to go to him, I suppose," sighed the heavy young man, despondently; "although I would almost as soon go to the devil himself, such a cursed favour as he makes of everything; but he is the only one amongst us who has got a rap."

"No, you needn't go to him," said Otto, turning from the window sharply, and speaking quick and low. There was an angry light on his face; perhaps his eyes and the Captain's had met in that moment of passing.

"What, Bodenbach! do you mean that you pledge yourself?" said the three voices in a breath.

"I am ready to stand good for the debt," he said, with a shade of *hauteur*.

"But are you able?" gasped Farkas.

"Is my word enough or not?" he inquired, shortly. It was all the more necessary for him to keep on the high horse, that he knew what folly he was committing. If it had not been for these two witnesses, he never would have committed it.

"Then you *did* get a fortune in Mexico?" observed the heavy young man, sententiously, staring with awe at his succourer. Otto made no answer, but as he turned away, once more followed by the gaze of his three companions, it seemed to him that a distant vision of what might have been his future triumph floated for a moment before his sight.

The drizzly weather gradually changed into the earnest of winter. Successive falls of snow made the roads passable again, and the peasants began taking to their sledges. Every peasant has his sledge in

Poland—a light primitive construction, drawn by a pair of half-starved horses hardly bigger than Shetland ponies, and flying over the face of the snowy roads at an incredible pace. The frost came along with the snow: the puddles froze first, and the mud grew stiff and hard; then a thin coating spread over the lake and thickened every day, growing firm at the edges first, and hardening rapidly into solid ice. The trees along the dam were crystallised into great sprays of white coral, and on their dazzling branches the birds sat in lugubrious groups, the small ones huddled together for warmth, perhaps trying to keep each other's spirits up; the large grey crows, less sociably inclined, sitting apart with bowed heads and limply hanging wings, each bearing its troubles alone.

About this time Otto heard from his brother again, and Arnold's letter contained a proposition which was highly unpalatable to him. He talked of making a run over to Rzeszów for a few days, or rather he announced his intention of doing so. It was absurd, he said, that they should not have seen each other since Otto's return from Mexico; and as from Otto's own letters there seemed to be so little chance of his coming home, and so many difficulties in the way of his getting leave, it would be simplest that Arnold, who was unfettered, should go over to Rzeszów instead. Of course, not for longer than a few days; he could not leave his father for more than a short time. He would also be glad of an opportunity of visiting his old regiment again, and renewing acquaintance with his old comrades. Arnold did not add that he would also be glad to see with his own eyes how matters were getting on between Otto and Comtesse Halka, and yet that was not the least amongst the mo-

tives which prompted this visit. That letter of good advice had remained unanswered and apparently unheeded, and he could not now get at the truth of the matter without pressing his brother very directly on the point—which was difficult to do by writing—or else by transporting himself bodily to the scene of action and judging for himself. He had got the idea into his head that Otto's suit was going ill—though how or why, he was at a loss to imagine ; whether on account of difficulties on the side of Halka and her family, or because Otto had changed his mind, he could not guess. In the latter case it was Arnold's opinion that Otto was acting not only very foolishly but very wrongly ; that having gone as far as he had done with the Comtesse, he had no right to draw back ; and that therefore it was his duty, as an elder brother, to remedy the evil. When Arnold fixed upon anything as being his duty, it usually ended by his making himself very disagreeable : he went at it with the whole energy of his nature, regardless of anything that came between, and in his ruthless course often doing much more harm than had he left the first evil unremedied. All his own instincts were so strong, his own opinions so unshakable, he was so unable to change a resolve when once formed, that he felt neither patience nor tolerance for weakness in any one else. It is usually only young strong characters that are thus intolerant to others : a weaker man would, from the very consciousness of his own weakness, be more merciful ; and an older man, with the same strength of character, would have been taught by experience not to expect too much from human nature, and learned not to judge all his fellow-creatures by the same measure he applies to himself. Therefore it is rarely that a very

young man of a very decided character is altogether amiable ; there will always be harshness and roughness to be softened, corners to be rubbed off, surfaces to be smoothed, before such a character is moulded into a pleasant whole.

No letter ever received by Otto was answered with such marvellous expedition as this one of Arnold's. It would seem that a sudden impulse of brotherly affection had come over him. By the very next post there went off to Steinbühl an epistle longer and more effusive than Otto's letters were wont to be, saying that of course it would be an immense pleasure to him to see his brother, and all that sort of thing, but drawing dreadful pictures of the severity of the winter which had just set in, dwelling in the most discouraging manner upon the disagreeables and perils of starting on a journey to Poland at that time of the year ; and, in short, endeavouring in the most insinuating manner to ward off the threatened visit. Arnold laughed over the letter, and started next morning ; it would have taken a great deal more than Otto's forebodings to alter his resolution. Otto himself had hardly hoped to succeed. He knew that Arnold was one of those pig-headed fellows whom one can never persuade into anything or out of anything ; and when therefore he got a telegram from his brother announcing his immediate arrival, he was more provoked than surprised. There was clearly now nothing for it but to put a good face on the matter, which meant doing his best to hoodwink Arnold as to his intentions towards the Comtesse, steering clear of any sort of explanations, and endeavouring by every means to put off the evil hour of disclosure.

It was a long drive from Z—to Rzeszów, —a very wearisome drive in a carriage ; but on a bright

winter's day like this, with plenty of snow to make the sledge slip along quickly, and plenty of furs to keep one's blood from freezing, the drive not only appeared shorter, but was shorter in reality; and Arnold felt really surprised when, within much less time than he had calculated, he found himself spinning right over the hard frozen lake, and saw the houses of Rzeszów and its tall bare poplars lying close before him in the winter dusk.

The first thing Arnold said on meeting his brother was, "Why, Otto, what have you been doing to make yourself so thin?"

There really was a change in Otto since Arnold had seen him last: the journeys, the fatigues, the fever, the Mexican climate, the excitement, had produced this change, and his present dissatisfaction had aggravated it. Between the brothers, as they now met, there was a more conspicuous difference than had been that day in the Café Schaum, where the reader first saw them. Their family likeness had weakened, their dissimilarities had widened. There was a striking difference between Arnold as he stepped out of the sledge—his face all aglow with the healthy winter air, his tall broad-shouldered frame expressing so much strength and proud self-reliance—and Otto, greeting his brother with more impatience than pleasure, and underlying the lively manner put on for the moment a shade of uneasiness, a look almost careworn.

"Well, so here you are!" said Otto to his brother, as they shook hands—rather needlessly enunciating a fact which was self-evident enough, considering Arnold's height and size. After all, Otto's words of reception were not more imbecile than those of the average of people on similar occasions. In nine cases out of ten, the first thing you will

say on the arrival of a friend will be either, "Here you are!" or, "Is that you?" or something equally to the point.

"Well, yes, here I am," answered Arnold, gripping his brother's hand with his strong grasp. "And from the pictures you drew me in your letter, it seems that you hardly expected me to reach my destination alive. I suppose your tropical experiences have made you chilly? I don't know when I have enjoyed anything so much as that last hour over the lake!"

That evening, when the brothers were together in Otto's room, Arnold made a few attempts at getting near the subject weighing on his mind. It was the first moment that they were really alone together, and they had just returned from supper, where Arnold had met with a warm reception from his old comrades. His worst fears were quieted, for during supper the communicative Langenfeld had managed to give him, *sotto voce*, a slight sketch of the ball and the *chasse*; and judging from these accounts, it was at least evident that Otto had not broken off with the Comtesse. Arnold was not a very good hand at manœuvring a conversation up to any particular point; and after beating about the bush for some time, while Otto skilfully evaded any approach to dangerous ground, he said, rather abruptly, "Has Comtesse Halka been in for the skating yet? The ice seems to be in capital order."

"I have not been on the ice myself yet," returned Otto, evasively. He did not mention that he knew the Comtesse had been in a few days previously, and that, knowing this, he had carefully kept out of the way.

"Not had time, I suppose?" suggested Arnold.

"Oh no, of course I had no time," answered Otto eagerly, clutching at

the excuse offered, and becoming suddenly very loquacious on the subject of drilling recruits, which, as he had declared, had been entirely engrossing his time and thoughts lately.

Two days passed, and the cold steadily increased, disgusting some people and delighting others; most of all, the skaters. The brothers had had many conversations together; they had discussed Mexico with seeming frankness on Otto's part; they had talked about their aunt, about uncle Max, about the visit, about Otto's fever. Naturally, also, Arnold had broached the subject of their fortune; but here he noticed with surprise that Otto shrank unaccountably from the slightest reference to that theme. That Otto was in low spirits was very evident; and at first Arnold, under the impression that only the dulness and drudgery of his life were affecting him, attempted to cheer him up by depicting and enlarging on the brilliant prospects which were theirs. This was just the sort of thing which Otto could least bear; he grew more moody and irritable in proportion as his brother grew more expansive. Arnold, casting about for a motive to this strange phenomenon, hit upon the idea that Otto had, or fancied he had, something seriously wrong with his health; and though nothing more occurred to strengthen this idea, still, perhaps, it made him more indulgent towards him than hitherto, and more circumspect in approaching the subject of Comtesse Halka. With this idea still running in his mind, he once suddenly broke off in the middle of his phrase, and asked Otto whether he were ill?

Otto denied the imputation savagely, but the other did not feel convinced. The two brothers were sitting in Otto's room after supper,

just as on the first evening. They were both smoking, and both in easy attitudes—Otto the easier of the two, having his legs on the table. I don't suppose it was this position which had alarmed Arnold; it looked, in fact, rather reassuring than otherwise.

"We must go to the ice to-morrow," Arnold remarked, presently; "it is Sunday, and you will be free of your recruits. I am longing to have a skate on that glorious surface, for I shan't have anything better than the duck-pond at Steinbühl for the rest of the winter."

"I don't know if I fancy the skating much at present; I had such a lot of it last year," replied Otto, from behind his newspaper.

"Comtesse Halka is coming in to-morrow, I believe."

"By the way," broke in Otto, "did you see in the telegrams that old Nap is knocked up?"

"And surely that is an inducement," went on the other.

"Is it? They have had five doctors down at Chiselhurst."

"You will go, will you not, Otto?"

"What is the good of going?"

"But, Otto——"

"What is the good of going! What is the good of doing anything, ever?" burst out Otto, despondently; and then, perceiving the surprise on his brother's face, he launched headlong into another paragraph of the paper: "Preparations for the great Exhibition are progressing daily. The edifices in course of construction will, it is asserted, outshine all those——"

"Nonsense, Otto! you know perfectly it is some good; it is quite your own fault if you don't succeed."

"Of course, you know that the Archduchess Gisela is engaged. It was in the papers yesterday," continued Otto, appearing not to have heard. "The marriage is to be——"

"Can't you put that paper down?" exclaimed his brother impatiently, and breaking the ice with a sudden plunge. "I don't want to hear about the Archduchess. You know it is about yourself I want to hear."

Otto put down his paper with a thump, took both his legs off the table with a bang, and rose to his feet. Arnold looked up to see what was going to happen next. Nothing happened just then, however, except that Otto began walking up and down the room. This was, then, the dreaded moment, and Otto saw that there was no evading it.

"You know I wrote to you," began Arnold, rather awkwardly.

Otto grumbled an assent.

"Why did you not answer me?"

"I did answer your letter."

"My letter, yes; but not the principal point of it. You know what I mean, Otto?"

"I suppose I know what you mean," rather sullenly. Otto stopped at the window a moment, and looked out,—not that there was much to be seen there, for it was almost dark outside; it would have been quite dark except for a little straggly moonlight which the whiteness of the snow caught up and made the most of. Now and then a peasant sledge came along noiselessly over the snow, and here and there the figure of a Jew crept along amongst the shadows, and stole round the corner. It was Saturday evening, and the faithful Hebrews who had been compelled to desist for twenty-four hours from traffic, were on their way home from the synagogue, strengthened and refreshed by prayer, and eager to begin their weekly course of cheating and fraud.

"My dear fellow," Arnold was saying, "you know perfectly well that I do not wish to force myself down your throat as a confidant;

but I always have been in your confidence hitherto, and I don't see why I should be shut out now. Why will you not let me be of use to you in this matter?"

Otto had resumed his walk about the room. Decidedly the size of the room had not been calculated for pedestrian exercise; for although not boasting of much furniture, the space was considerably encumbered by things lying about it in miscellaneous untidiness.

"Confound it!" he exclaimed, not as an answer to Arnold, but because he had come with considerable force against the table, which occupied the centre of the room—a sort of cross-breed between a writing and a dressing table, having a looking-glass and ink-stand, and various other articles appertaining to these two classes, indiscriminately blended on it, and hardly leaving space enough for a top-heavy-looking lamp. The table was of a very shaky construction, and looking-glass, ink-stand, and lamp trembled ominously at Otto's contact.

"Nobody can be of use to me."

"Nonsense, Otto! you have been taking some morbid notions into your head. Is it because you are afraid that Count Przeszechowski will not accept you as a son-in-law?"

To this Otto gave no answer; and Arnold, taking silence for assent, went on—

"I don't see what difficulties there can be on the family's side—for now, with your share of uncle Max's fortune, you are more than a match for her; and if it is the Comtesse's favour you doubt, then you certainly must be underrating your own advantages. Perhaps the matter could be better managed through a third person, and in that case——"

"Hang it! I never said I wanted

to marry her," interrupted Otto, angrily, alarmed at the pace at which Arnold was going.

At this juncture Arnold rose to his feet too, and began walking round the room after his brother. It had been bad enough when Otto was walking alone, but now that two full-grown men were pacing about it excitedly, rather like wild beasts in a cage, the narrow space was wholly inadequate, and the shaky table in the middle stood in serious peril.

"What on earth do you mean, Otto? Why, only last March we discussed this whole matter, and you told me positively that your mind was quite made up about it." Here Arnold broke off with an exclamation of acute pain, having come in sharp contact with one of the angles of the table. The looking-glass collapsed.

"Hang it! I am not saying that I don't mean to marry her," Otto put in recklessly, in order to prevent Arnold from resuming inconvenient reminiscences. This inconsistent lightness in treating the matter grated very much against Arnold's principles; his temper began to rise.

"What is the use of this shilly-shallying? You meant to marry her last year, and nothing has occurred since to make you alter your mind?"

"Oh no, nothing," thought Otto, bitterly, to himself. Nothing, except that he had given his heart and his faith to another woman. But aloud he 'did not answer, accepting Arnold's words in silence. No doubt he would have been justified in flaring up too, and telling Arnold to mind his own business, and under ordinary circumstances he certainly would have taken that course; but miserably guilty as he felt, he did not dare to assert his independence, for fear of exciting

his brother's suspicions, and thus putting him on the real tack.

"You surely don't call it a reason," continued Arnold, impatiently, as if answering an argument of Otto's, "to throw up the matter because your prospects have improved? Last year, when you hadn't a penny of your own, you were ready enough——"

"But did I say I was going to throw it up?" interrupted Otto, again talking recklessly. If only Arnold could be quieted into the belief that he had not given up his intentions towards the Comtesse, then it would be all right, he thought; and later he would explain everything by writing, which would be so much easier. At this moment Otto had got into a corner somehow, and found himself barricaded in, on one side by the rickety table, and on the other side by Arnold, who had planted himself before him.

"Well, and if you haven't given it up, why are you so slow about it?—you who are always complaining of the drudgery and hardships of your present life, and when you have only got to put out your hand to be free of it all? It can surely now be no object to you to secure the wretched pension you are entitled to; and what other object can induce you to hang on here unless it be to press your suit with the Comtesse? Then why do you not press the matter more energetically and get it settled soon? You would then be rich and independent, and it has always been your wish to be rich, Otto; I have known that for long." Arnold's voice softened a little, and he put his hand on his brother's shoulder; he really meant it well with him. in spite of his seeming roughness. Otto felt as if a lump were rising in his throat; for a moment he thought he was going to confess

everything to Arnold and be done with deception. Arnold had always helped him as yet out of his difficulties. But there arose in his mind the immediate and inevitable consequences of such a step; fancy the sermons, the strings of argument, the reasonings, the persuasions which would be so difficult to withstand because they would so exactly correspond with his own ideas! No, enough for the day is the evil thereof," thought Otto, and so he shook his brother's hand off, and extricated himself from the corner.

Arnold set off again in pursuit, both men perfectly unconscious of the ludicrous side of their behaviour.

"Now before you went to Mexico——"

"I wish I had never gone to Mexico!" burst out Otto, passionately, and wheeling suddenly round; and then he stopped short: his own words had surprised him; he had not meant to say them; he had not even known that that idea had been maturing in his mind. Arnold's talk of their future prospects, the pictures he had drawn of them, had produced more impression on him than he was aware of. Now that he had said the words, he thought he must be mad. They stood facing each other for a second, Arnold's eyes reading his brother's face, and then he turned away without speaking, and took a few turns in deep and thoughtful silence. A new idea had struck him. Presently, with what appeared to be total irrelevancy to the subject, he said, "You have told me so little about your time in Mexico, and about the people you met there."

"I didn't meet any people there," answered Otto, crossly, not yet quite perceiving his brother's drift.

"Had you no society at all?"

"None at all."

"Nobody but aunt Olivia and her companion?"

A swift dread shot into Otto's mind; he knew his brother's drift now. "No, nobody but aunt Olivia and her companion," he answered, speaking fast, and shrugging his shoulders to cover his embarrassment.

Arnold was not very quick-sighted, but even he thought he detected something unnatural in the tone, and so pursued his inquiries rather jerkily. "Has the companion been long with my aunt? What sort of a person is she?"

"Really, Arnold, you ask such extraordinary questions; you know I am not good at describing people."

"What sort of age?"

"How can I tell? It is almost impossible to guess the age of those Mexicans."

"Oh, Mexican, was she? Still you might be able to tell whether she were old or young?"

"How can I tell what your ideas of age are?"

"About forty or fifty is she?"

Otto glanced furtively towards the drawer where he had safely locked away his sketch-book. "Something like that, I suppose; I really can't say," and before he had got through the phrase a deadly shame seized upon his heart; every fibre that was noble in him recoiled before the meanness; his honour and his conscience cried out for the truth. Was it not as if he had renounced his right to Reata? He could have gone out and wept bitterly, like the weak apostle when he denied his Master. A minute ago he might still have told all to his brother, and would have had the right to expect his sympathy; now with his own words he had built himself up a barrier, and he lacked the courage to throw it down again with his own hands. He turned away abruptly to hide the

blood which he felt rising to his face and throbbing hotly in his temples, for in the middle of that stinging sense of shame the first instinct was to hide its expression from his brother's eyes. His movement was so abrupt, and done with such perfect disregard to the surroundings, that it brought him for the second time smash up against the table; and Arnold, brushing past at the other side, finished up that rickety and much-tried piece of furniture: it tottered for a moment, and then with a resounding crash came down on its side, bearing looking-glass, ink-stand, and lamp into a ruinous heap, and leaving the brothers in absolute darkness.

By the time that order and light were re-established, Otto had got

over his first sense of shame. So far, he was safe, for Arnold had noticed nothing beyond some impatience on his brother's side; his suspicions had rather been mere ideas thrown out, and would without difficulty be quieted again: undoubtedly now it was Otto's best course to keep Arnold in the belief that all was right between him and Halka.

The thread of the conversation had been broken by the smash, and Arnold did not attempt to resume it; only, in leaving his brother for the night, he said again, "You will come to the ice, will you not, Otto!" and he was surprised by the readiness with which Otto answered—

"Oh yes, of course I will—I always meant to; only I hate being badgered into anything."

CHAPTER XXII.—AN ICE QUEEN.

"Die Schnee-Königin küsste Kay noch einmal, und dann hatte er die kleine Gerda und die Grossmutter und Alle daheim vergessen."—*Die Schnee-Königin*: ANDERSEN'S Märchen.

The ice next day was thronged with the whole society of Rzeszów. It was Sunday, and many people who could not spare time for such a frivolous employment on week-days, were here to-day to enjoy themselves for once in a way. It was, moreover, a brilliant winter's day, with a clear sunshine tempering the sharpness of the air, and showering sparkles over everything. Even the big grey crows were slightly cheered up by the general brightness; they came down off their branches and hopped about the ice clumsily, looking starved and lanky, and not in the least disturbed by the presence of the skaters. There were fringes of icicles along the earth-banks of the lake, and the bushes that hung over were laden with crystals. At the far end the bulrushes grew in clumps,

straight out of the ice; and here and there a few taller feathery reeds mixed with them, and these drooped heavily with the crown of diamonds which the frost had laid on them, as if overpowered with their own magnificence. But this was far away at the other end of the lake, almost out of sight of where the skaters were. They seemed a great number: but when you came to look nearer, it was only the smaller half that were skaters, the rest spectators; and only the smaller half again of the skaters could skate at all. The fashion of ladies skating had only sprung up lately in those regions, and most of the ladies who had skates on to-day were clinging helplessly to their male supporters, giving vent to their terror by variously articulated exclamations, or in extreme cases by shrieks; at

the best, moving along cautiously, watching the progress of their feet with nervous anxiety, and seeking with outspread arms to keep up their balance. This was what the general run of the ladies did: there were a few among them who had arrived at a higher stage of the art; but there was only one who skated perfectly.

A conspicuous figure among the spectators was Piotr, who, waiting to carry home his master's skates, was whiling away the time by sliding about in a decidedly sprawling fashion, his progress slightly impeded by a gigantic prayer-book held under his arm. It was one of Piotr's principles to carry about a prayer-book with him on Sundays, even if he had not time to go to church.

A tall figure in dark velvet was sweeping down the ice, alone, unsupported, and free—past the various groups of audience, and the straggling lines of beginners—past the peasant sledges, which had paused for a minute in their transit across the lake to take a look at this unwonted spectacle; and then, when she had almost reached the straight, stiff bank, when it seemed as if in that lightning speed she must dash against it without the power of stopping, a quick turn, no more than a slight movement of her feet, and she had faced round, and stood pausing for a moment, erect and motionless, calm and unconcerned. Comtesse Halka, of course. Standing there as she did, in the shadow of the overhanging bank, her dress looked black; but when the sunlight caught it at the edge of the folds, you could see that it was blue, an intense dark shade of blue. She was very much muffled up in blue fox-fur; it nestled round her throat and round her wrists, and bands of the same fur crossed her velvet skirt.

If it is true that nothing is more

distressing to witness than an awkward skater, it certainly is as true that one of the pleasantest things to watch is a woman who skates both well and gracefully; for the one does not necessarily go with the other. I have known men who declare that no form of feminine grace can excel this one. After this preliminary, it is almost unnecessary to say that Comtesse Halka was one of those women who skate both well and gracefully. If she had not known this—if she had thought it possible that she could in any point fall short of the highest standard of skating, or if she had not felt assured that she was unapproached in her art by any one lady on the Rzeszów ice—then Comtesse Halka would not have skated at all; she would rather have renounced her favourite pastime than expose herself to be rivalled in it by another woman. Hers was not one of those natures who delight in the excitement of endeavouring to outshine a rival. If she could not do it without a visible effort, then rather would she keep aloof from the scene. She could not bear to do anything which she did not do to perfection, and she was quicker than most women in finding out what she could do well and what she could not, and had the wisdom to refrain from doing those things which she was aware of not doing well. Thus, although her voice had been carefully trained, and was of considerable compass, she never sang—well aware that her organ was not one likely to captivate the ear. For this reason she had trained herself to speak always in a subdued voice. A refinement of vanity, all this, if you will; but how many inflictions would be spared to society if vanity oftener adopted this form! If vanity is to be—and as long as women are it will be—surely this

is its least aggravating garb, but not its most innocent one.

While Halka still stood in the shadow of the bank, Otto skated up to her, following the same line she had taken, wheeling round quickly in the same way she had done, though not perhaps with such finished skill. Otto had spoken to the Comtesse before, that afternoon ; but just then he fancied that Arnold was looking restless, and was watching him, and a little conversation with the Comtesse would soon quiet him again. He offered himself with a word, she accepted him with a movement, and then they flew over the ice together, dispersing the skaters right and left : some shuffled out of the way grumbling, others laughing, the *gamins* stood admiring and gaping as that dark velvet figure shot through their middle.

"Ah, that is what I call skating!" said Schweiner, whose eyeglass had followed the rapidly lessening figures. "It seems to be all the same to her whether she goes backwards or forwards. If one could only make out how she does it!"

For by this time Halka had let go Otto's hand, and was skating backwards facing him. This mode of skating is a difficult one for a lady to attain, perhaps not even desirable to be attained ; it must necessarily call upon the strength very much, and any appearance of putting out strength detracts from the charm of a lady's skating. No doubt there are many women who skate well backwards ; but amongst ten of them, nine will offend your eye by the suggestion of vigour in their movements, and only the tenth will glide along with that effortless swiftness which resembles the graceful swaying of a bird poised in mid-air.

"What a noise there is going on over there!" said Halka to Otto,

arresting herself in her backward skimming, and standing still on her skates, with her head turned towards the skaters.

They were tolerably far out towards the middle of the lake, quite separate from the others, and shrieks and laughter and canine howls reached them faintly through the still winter air.

"Somebody been run over, I suppose. I can't conceive what makes them all stay together in a heap, and getting into each other's way, when they have the whole lake to go upon."

"Gregarious instinct, probably," remarked Halka, with a slight sniff of her aristocratic nostrils. "It is much pleasanter out here ; do you not think so?"

Of course Otto thought so, and said so ; how could it be otherwise! Halka was still standing with her head a little turned, as if listening to the sounds ; and Otto, standing a few paces off and looking at her, was struck by the finished grace of her pose, the angle at which she held her head, the clear pink colour which exercise had brought into her face,—for her faded complexion freshened wonderfully under the influence of the sharp winter air ; her eyes were shining brightly under this influence, or perhaps under another. And she stood there still, apparently intent on the sounds over there, and yet perfectly aware of Otto's admiring gaze, knowing exactly how each detail and circumstance was working its effect on him — knowing exactly how even the surroundings of the moment, how even the paleness of the winter sky, the banks of snow in the distance, even the perspective of frozen tree-branches behind her darkly-clad figure, were setting her off to the fullest advantage,—an ice queen in the midst of her territory!

"I think they are all picked up

again," she said, turning her head back towards him; "they are quiet, at least. How pretty it looks over there near the creek where the reeds grow!" looking across the lake in that direction. "Only fancy, I have never been there yet! I must do it some day."

"Why not to-day?" said Otto, with *empressement*.

"No, I think not, Baron Bodenbach," replied Halka, after a moment's hesitation, in which she had rapidly weighed the *pros* and *cons* of his suggestion; "the sun is getting rather low already, and I am tired too. Next Sunday I shall be coming in again, and we can do it then, perhaps."

She was looking tired; the colour had faded out of her cheek again. It is just that effortless, bird-like style of skating that is the most trying—for, after all, nature has not given us wings; and if we, for a time, manage to keep up a tolerable imitation of flying, she will have her revenge.

"You have been doing too much, Comtesse, for the beginning of the season," said Otto. "Strength will only come when you get into the habit again."

"But I began my season the other day already; I was in here, you know, last Monday." She looked steadily at Otto as she said this, as if to keep him from denying that he had known she was there.

Otto did not attempt to deny, but he felt somehow a little ashamed of himself.

"That day I was out till very late; it was partly Captain Kreislich's fault, for he insisted on taking me off such a long distance in the chair."

"That is, probably what has knocked you up," said Otto, shortly, feeling as if Kreislich had done him an injury.

"Nonsense! how can it knock

me up to sit quiet in a chair? It is rather I who should reproach myself with knocking him up, for he sprained his ankle that day, and I fear that is why he is not here to-day." To this Otto made no answer; and perhaps she interpreted his silence rightly, for she added, "I am not so far gone as you think; I shall be able to get back quite well with the help of your hand."

"You must take both my hands, this way crossed; it is much more resting." And then slowly the two sailed back over the ice towards the others.

Arnold, watching them, and having watched them for some time, felt himself greatly relieved by all he had seen during the last half-hour. They had gone off, Otto holding her hand; they had spent some time away apart from the others, alone with each other; and now they were returning, Otto holding both her hands, and they were coming slowly, not in a hurry to rejoin the crowd.

Otto, as he came nearer, saw a well-pleased look on Arnold's face, and a well-pleased twinkle in Arnold's eye, and congratulated himself on the successful manner in which he had managed to soothe down Arnold's disquietude. Surely after this there would be no more danger of sermons and good advice!

When he was within shouting distance, Otto shouted to his brother to bring the chair as the Comtesse was tired.

It is a nasty feeling to step on to the footboard of a chair of that sort with skates on your feet, and the help of Otto's arm was necessary to seat Halka safely.

"There, give a hand, Arnold," said Otto to his brother, and the light wooden chair, pushed by two strong men, ran along at a speed that was almost alarming: the

Comtesse leant back with her usual languid grace.

"How fast we are going!" she said, turning her head half round towards them; "haven't we come out far enough? we are getting nearly into the middle of the lake again—it is too much trouble for you to take."

Arnold looked to his brother to speak—clearly it was his place; and Otto, pursuing his system of quieting, readily answered something to the effect that there was no question of trouble but simply of pleasure, and that he would be delighted to push her in this way as far as the North Pole, &c., &c.; to which Halka made no answer, but leant back again in silence. After which, Arnold, seeing things in such a promising state, said something unintelligible about the strap of his left skate and quietly dropped back. The sledge flew on with only a little slackened speed, and Otto was in for a second *tête-à-tête*. Arnold, kneeling on the ice and making a sort of show as if busy with his skate, looked after them, and thought that he had managed that little business very neatly. "It is all going as smoothly as possible," he said, not referring to the progress of the sledge over the ice; "he only wanted a little touching up, and now I can leave things to work for themselves."

"Were you as far as this the other day?" asked Otto, bending down a little.

"Oh no, not half," she answered, looking up at him for a moment with a smile that was not quite her usual way of smiling, which people called so cold. "I think you push the chair faster than Captain Kreisllich; but as you are not going to take me to the North Pole, supposing we turn?"

The sun was very near setting behind the line of low purple hills; dusk was still some little way off, but the frosty brilliancy was gone from the lake, the sparkles and the showers of diamonds from the trees and the grasses, the icicles along the earth-banks were no longer shining crystals but dull grey glass: now the sunshine was gone, you could feel how bitter was the frost's hard bite. The big grey crows fluttered up heavily to their branches, and settled down again wearily to their cold night's rest. In the space of ten minutes the lake was deserted.

It was to soothe Arnold, of course, that Otto wrapped up the Comtesse carefully in her heavy fur cloak; and also to soothe Arnold that he handed her into the sledge and arranged the covers round her feet with such assiduous attention.

CHAPTER XXIII.—DRIFTING.

"Can he be fair that withers at a blast?
Or he be strong that airy breath can cast?"

—FRANCIS QUARLES.

During the remaining days of his brother's visit, Otto did not get a single word of good advice; nor did Arnold in any way recur to that subject which had been discussed on that evening when they had knocked over the table between

them—he was quite satisfied with the progress of affairs, and Otto was quite satisfied at having satisfied him. Of course, when Arnold was no longer there to watch, it would be easy, he thought, to drop out of his attendance on the Comtesse; at

was such a simple expedient he had chosen to insure peace to himself and rest to his brother's mind.

Arnold went out to call at Snybinice, and Otto went with him; not very willingly, as he told himself, but because it would have appeared so strangely rude to remain behind when his brother was going. Poles are always hospitable, and on this occasion the old Count was particularly hospitable. The visitors were retained for dinner; then when, an hour after the lengthy meal, they rose to take their leave, it was declared impossible that they should go so soon after dinner; then when, a little later, they made a second attempt, the old Count would not hear of their going, it was too near supper-time; and the end of it was, that the morning's call was lengthened into half a day's visit, and the brothers drove home at night by the light of the stars, over the crisp sliding snow.

Arnold left next day, and next day again was Sunday; and Otto found that he was not quite able to begin the leaving off of his attendance yet—for had he not made a sort of half appointment with the Comtesse for taking her to the reeds? and if he stayed away it would look as if he were afraid to meet her. No; that sort of thing must be done gradually, little by little. First, he would begin staying away from the ice on the days when she came, or coming late—there always would be an excuse found for that; and then he would stop coming altogether, would renounce skating; and probably in the meantime the frost would break up and facilitate his escape. It was quite easy; the whole thing was as clear as possible in his mind. And so he went that Sunday, and took Halka to the reeds and back again, and found that it had been

on the whole rather pleasant than otherwise.

After that, the frost did not break up yet. A Polish frost is not like our English ones, which step in for two days at a time, coming in so conveniently in novels for a chapter or so, just at the moment when the hero is to be made jealous or inconstant; and as soon as this desirable result has been attained, to melt away as conveniently in the next. A Polish frost is a stern hard reality, keeping its iron grasp unrelaxed for weeks, sometimes months. This particular frost lasted even long enough for the Captain's severely-sprained ankle to get cured, enabling him to resume his skating, and constant attendance on the Comtesse. Neither did Otto renounce skating yet, nor did he even begin to come later on the days when the Comtesse was there. Whether it was indolence or *ennui*, or inclination, or disinclination for anything else, or habit, I cannot say. What band is stronger to hold a weak man than the weak band of habit?—so easy to break through with one resolute wrench, but so much pleasanter to yield to it, to put off the moment of the wrench, to be carried down by the stream rather than struggle against it, quieted by the knowledge (or shall we say belief?) that there is only one little effort wanted to free one's self from the current—that effort in itself so small a thing that it hardly seems worth while making it yet. Why not enjoy things as they come, and take pleasures as fate offers them to us?

But stronger still than all these negative causes was the spur of rivalry—the consciousness which he was beginning slowly to gain, of which Halka allowed him now and then to catch glimpses, that it lay in his power to distance his enemy entirely. The Captain acted from

no other motive than to further his own ends, but unconsciously he was acting the very part which played into Halka's hands with most perfection. To the lookers-on it was an even race, a struggle between the two; but to Otto it was more than this—it was the wild insane desire to show the prevalence of his power over that of the other. The power itself he could not use; there was no end to be gained by it. The thing he was struggling to wrest from his rival he did not want for himself; it was only to take it from him that he fought. At times he would start up angrily under the sting of an unbearable thought—his enemy would triumph after all! Put it off as he might, the tables would be turned at last; the day must come when all this sham fighting must be dropped and his true position become known. That man who was his rival in everything, even to his beauty, his rival in all but one precious point—and to whom, moreover, he owed a mortal grudge,—he would carry off the prize for which they had appeared to be equally contending. It would be no defeat, Otto said to himself, for the victory would have been barren to him; but it was the appearance of defeat which was to him unendurable. How convince the world that he had got what he wanted? Ah, if he had been able to carry off his beautiful Reata with a fortune to lay at her feet, then, indeed, the climax of the situation would have been a glorious one!

Hardly did he dare to look into the future, hardly dwell on the happiness in store for him by the side of his peerless bride; for would not that happiness be poisoned by poverty? In a moment of madness he had complicated his position by pledging himself for his comrade's debts, well knowing that it would never be in his power

to satisfy the creditors. He had but done this for the insane desire to taste for once the power he was going to renounce. He had not acted dishonourably, he told himself, for it was not as if the means lay absolutely beyond his reach; but his reasoning did not more than half convince himself, and his discontent with the future made him turn away from it and eagerly grasp at present pleasures.

Little by little, without his knowing it, Otto was being steered back into the same position he had stood in towards Halka last year; little by little he was yielding a step and she was gaining a step—the yielding so unconscious, the gaining so well masked, that never was he aroused to look ahead and see where he was going. Looking back from one day to the other, there was no change to be seen; but looking back from week to week, a change was there always. But Otto never thought of analysing weeks, and comparing them with each other. The outsiders who did analyse the weeks, after their fashion, marked the changes, of course; and in their eyes, especially in the eyes of Otto's comrades, he was an object of envy, an uncommonly lucky fellow, a favourite of fortune. Otto saw it and felt it, and this feeling of gratified vanity was just the thing most congenial to his nature. How much greater would their envy grow if they knew of the fortune which might have been his, which might still be his! the thought would sometimes flash into his mind—a thought to be shaken off and laughed at for its bare impossibility, but leaving each time the mark of its impression. He clung to his false position all the more because he knew that when its falseness came to light, envy would be changed to pity—pitiful compassion for the poor fool who was

renouncing a double fortune for the sake of a woman's beautiful face ! Some few there might be who would understand that such a woman was a treasure in herself, who would envy him her beauty ; but even they would think him a fool for having paid such a price for it : and to the bulk and mass of his fellow-creatures he would be no less than mad. There were moments when, taking an abstract view of matters, it seemed to him himself that he was mad ; and there were moments, too, when it seemed to him so hard, so cruelly hard, not to be able to grasp that ball of fortune which lay so close to his hand that he had only to close his fingers over it in order to hold it. By dint of pondering over his situation, it had come to seem more bitter every day. What a cruel fate was his ! Why should his lot be cast in this way, so that the only woman he loved, and who loved him, should unconsciously be made to pluck away from him that ball of fortune—that fortune for which he had sighed all his life, and which, unknown to himself, was gaining daily a more determined sway over his very soul ? And to think that such a wretched trifle as a name—not even a name, but the want of the mere miserable little prefix of *von*—should stand between him and happiness !

Another skating day, but not a brilliant winter's day : no diamonds strewn about ; trees and bushes and banks all one colourless dead white ; the sky all one colourless dead grey, heavy and snow-laden. It had begun snowing a little already, very spare little flakes, falling thinly through the air, and starring the ice with minute constellations. A sharp wind was rising and running over the lake, chasing tiny whirls of snow-wreaths before it. The reeds at the other end rustled noisily, and the bulrushes were striking

their brown heads together ; but there was nobody to listen to their woe-begone music in the deserted creek—nobody but the wild ducks that had their haunts in among the forest of stalks.

Not the sort of day to choose for skating, certainly, but there were skaters on the ice ; there were *gamins* who never cared for weather—there were the officers belonging to the Equitation, who, having only one free afternoon in the week besides Sunday, could not afford to lose their day's skating on one of them, because it happened to be snowing a little. There was Halka, who laughed at the idea of snow and ice being able to hurt her ; and there was also Otto.

They had been struggling against the wind, five or six of them hand in hand ; tacking about to avoid the worst gusts—helping each other on, or hindering each other, as the case might be—and all trying to be persuaded that they were enjoying themselves very much.

"Look ! this is the best way," said Comtesse Halka, leaving go the hands on either side of her, and allowing herself to be turned by the wind and carried on by its fierce breath alone straight ahead, right across the lake.

"I assure you it is very pleasant," she called back over her shoulder to the others ; and in another minute they had all let go hands, and were all getting carried away like a flock of water-birds driven before the wind. A delicious feeling this floating away on your own feet, but without requiring to use them : with your skates just gliding lightly over the ice, you could almost forget that you are human. But oh, the misery of turning ! For turn you must some time, and face round in the teeth of the wind, struggling for each step, and feeling so very human indeed !

"The lake is looking splendid to-day!" said Halka, pausing to draw breath. "I like it even better this way than in sunshine. With this snowdrift flying over everything, you might almost fancy that the banks are mountains. I am sorry I cannot draw."

"Bodenbach is the man for that sort of thing," put in Langenfeld; "you should make him sit down on the spot and do it for you."

"I should be delighted, I am sure; if you will tell me a way to keep one's paper from being carried off, and one's eyes from being blinded by the snow, and also suggest something to sit upon."

"Do it from memory," said Schweiner; "the easiest thing possible—a lot of white paint daubed down in all directions. I could do it myself."

"I should like to see that production of yours," remarked Otto, with artistic superciliousness.

"I didn't know you were an artist, Baron Bodenbach," said Halka, turning to Otto.

"Oh, isn't he!" said Schweiner; "and hasn't he got a whole sketch-book full of drawings!"

Otto threw an uneasy glance towards Schweiner, and a still uneasier one at Captain Kreislich, who at that moment was fortunately out of earshot, being occupied with the adjustment of his skate at a little distance. Schweiner, who perfectly understood the meaning of the glance, gave a wink with one of his eyelids, which said, "Trust me, I know what I am about;" but yet Schweiner was not disposed to give up tormenting Otto a little longer.

"And he never lets us see them," said Langenfeld; "keeps them all to himself."

They were standing on the ice in a little knot—Halka, Otto, Schweiner, Langenfeld, and the heavy young man: the rest of the gentle-

men were on ahead,—the snowflakes falling lightly at their feet and on to their heads and shoulders, and flying into their faces: the men's moustaches were crystallised with the snow; Halka's hair was powdered with it, and her velvet dress was thickly sown with flakes.

"Schweiner is the only one who has had a peep at it," said the heavy young man, trying to speak playfully; "he says it is all full of——"

"Trees and houses," interrupted Schweiner, "and landscapes and ships."

"And faces," finished the heavy young man, who was decidedly aiming at being playful to-day.

Schweiner, who was standing behind the Comtesse, began making faces of another description, and of a hideous nature, at the heavy young man, and cast furious glances from out of both his eyes, for the single eyeglass had become useless in the snow.

"Portraits, I suppose?" said Halka, looking at Otto for explanation. Otto was biting his under lip and stamping about on his skates impatiently. "I should like to see your sketch-book very much, Baron Bodenbach."

"I shall be delighted to show it you; I shall send it to-morrow morning, if you like," said Otto, readily, mentally resolving that *the* face should disappear out of the book first; a slice with his penknife would make it all right. "But I am afraid you will be disappointed, Comtesse; really there is not much to show, it is crammed with scribblings and studies."

"I like scribblings and studies better than pictures," said Halka.

"Oh, but——" began the heavy young man.

"Some of those heads are remarkably clever," broke in Schweiner, attempting, with another thun-

dering glance, to suppress the young man,—“especially the outlines of nigger profiles.”

“But the pretty girl with the black eyes isn’t a nigger,” went on the heavy youth, not in the least suppressed—rather elated, on the contrary, and feeling just in the vein for making brilliant remarks.

“What about a nigger with black eyes?” asked Halka, who had been watching the flight of some wild ducks above their heads, but who had heard every word quite distinctly. “Haven’t niggers always got black eyes?”

Otto had his head turned quite away now; his lips were twitching, and he stood gazing steadily into the thickening snowdrift.

Schweiner had put up his single eyeglass again in spite of the snow, and was regarding his youthful comrade with a look which might well have turned a more sensitive individual into stone.

“Oh, but it wasn’t a nigger at all,” went on the thick-skinned youth, stolidly. “It was a beautiful creature, with long hair and black eyelashes—at least Schweiner says so; didn’t you, Schweiner?”

“I never said anything of the sort,” answered Schweiner immovably; “and I haven’t a notion what you are talking about.”

“Oh, but you must have forgotten, then,” exclaimed the heavy young man, on whose understanding a glimmering was beginning to dawn that something was wrong somewhere, but whose offended sense of veracity pushed on to clear up the matter further.

Comtesse Halka was looking at the ducks again. Otto was still turned away, feeling as if he would like very much to strangle the young man on the spot, and Schweiner looked as if he would not have minded giving him a hand in the

operation. Langenfeld stood by, twirling his moustache nervously; he had also heard about that face in the sketch-book, and the comments that had circulated thereon.

“You must have forgotten, then; I am sure you said something of the sort. Don’t you remember saying, ‘Just the sort of woman I admire; none of your washed-out blondes for me’?”

A deep pause followed on the remark. The moment was one of extreme urgency; the three men looked at each other helplessly. Schweiner would have liked to be swallowed up by the ice at once, leaving the heavy young man to fight it out with the washed-out blonde he had just insulted.

Comtesse Halka alone kept her presence of mind. “Look!” she exclaimed, more abruptly than was her wont, “the wild ducks are going to alight over there; can you see, Baron Bodenbach?” and she pointed towards the middle of the lake. Otto turned his head now—he could not do otherwise; and Halka, while seeming intent on the birds, just swept one glance over his face, and took in every mark of disturbance, every line of emotion, even the trouble in his eyes, and understood what it meant. “I shall try to get near them,” she said again; and as she started off down the wind, with the snowflakes flying in a weird dance around her, a change had come over her face: her eyes were shining curiously with the hard bright gleam of glass; her lips pressed tightly upon each other, looking thin, as people never saw them look, but as nature had made them; and within her heart the resolution of weeks and months past was hardening quickly with a despairing hardness, fixed by the shaft of bitter jealous pain, which had hit and wounded her so sorely. It

was not the Lieutenant's inopportune talk that had touched her; it was what she had seen in that one glance in Otto's face. From that moment forward she knew that his love was not hers, and would never be.

Next morning the Comtesse received Otto's sketch-book, as he had promised, and after looking through the pages, she made two remarks: the first, that a page had been cut out with a penknife; the second, that although there were plenty outlines of niggers' profiles, there was nowhere to be seen the portrait of any girl with long hair and black eyelashes.

Christmas was now drawing near, and for several years past Count Przeszechowski had always taken up his wife and daughter to the capital at Christmas-time. Nobody doubted that the same thing would occur this year, but as yet there were no signs forthcoming of their yearly departure. And when it came to be within two days of Christmas, it began to get generally known that the family were not going to L——, but, contrary to their habit, were going to spend their Christmas at Snyhinice. People were disturbed, as people always are about their neighbours' affairs, and wondered what the reason could be, and made guesses at the truth. Only Otto knew the truth, and this was how he had come by his knowledge: It had been on the ice, of course—everything that happened now, happened on the ice. Halka had taken an opportunity of mentioning that they were going to start next week for the capital; she had mentioned the fact shortly, distinctly, without adding any comment. Otto had been pushing her in the chair at the moment, and they were out of hearing of the others.

"Are you really going to be so cruel as to desert us, Comtesse! I shall give up skating at once," he had said in answer. A very commonplace compliment certainly; but Otto's way of saying things made them sound different.

"But you will be away with your family, I suppose," she had said; "how can my going affect you?"

"But I am not going to be away, not even for a day," had been his reply; "I am going to spend my Christmas here."

"It is difficult to get leave of absence, I suppose?" the Comtesse had suggested.

Otto ought to have agreed about the difficulty of leave, but he had not done so; on the contrary, he put up another suggestion of his own.

"Perhaps I do not care to ask for leave," and he had bent down a little over the chair as he said this.

It was playing with edged tools, of course, and it is very wrong to play with edged tools, and very foolish; and it usually ends in one's cutting one's fingers: but there is so much pleasant stimulating excitement about it; it is so much more interesting to play with edged tools than with blunt ones! Have we not all felt this, since the time that we were forbidden to touch scissors and knives, and that scissors and knives, in consequence, became the height of our ambition?

Otto's edged tools were going to be removed from him by the Comtesse's departure, and he almost felt regret at letting them go, and would not let them go without handling them a little longer.

After that suggestion of Otto's, there had been a pause—the sledge had gone skimming on in silence, and the Comtesse had looked on

straight in front without speaking ; and then Otto had broken the pause by saying—

"What day are you going, Comtesse ? And is your departure quite settled ?"

"Very nearly, not quite," she had answered. "Papa and mamma are very anxious for it."

"And you ?" And asking this Otto had bent down again, lower than before.

"I am not so anxious—now," the last word breathed forth so low, that it was only by bending nearer—so near that he could almost feel

her hair against his cheek—that Otto had been able to catch it. She had not looked at him, but he had got a clear view of her face, and had seen that her lips were trembling. What man is invulnerable to such subtle flattery as this ? Otto was only too vulnerable to it ; small wonder that he had answered, "Could you not persuade the Count to change his mind about going ?"

"I daresay I might if I tried," Halka had replied, still looking away ; and after this no more had been said on the subject.

CHAPTER XXIV.—LIBERTY.

"Gold alone does passion move,
Gold monopolises love."
—COWLEY.

It was on Christmas eve, when the church-bells were ringing out their loudest peals into the frosty air, around the frozen house-tops, and over the skeleton trees, that Otto got another letter from Reata—a short, untidy letter, straggly and blotched, not very legible, but yet legible enough to make the meaning of each word quite clear to him. The early winter dusk was beginning to steal over the world, and Otto was obliged to take the sheet to the window, so as to catch the waning light on the paper. As he stood there reading, outside in the street people were hastening to church, summoned by the joyful ringing of the Christmas-bells. At another time Otto might have cared to watch them from his window, at another time the bells might have sounded joyful to him too ; now his eyes were riveted on the sheet of paper alone, his thoughts were only of the words written there, in that scrawled untidy hand, and the Christmas-bells

clanked disagreeably in his ears with a disturbing sound.

The letter began abruptly—

"I have just received your letter, and am writing at once, in the same hour that I have received it. I have not considered ; it does not need to consider or to think. I have felt it coming—rather I read it coming in your letter, though for a time I tried hard not to read it. We must part. You do not love me well enough to prefer me to everything else ; and that is the way I must be loved, the only way I will be loved. I have told you so before. It may be folly, or madness, or call it what you wish. God knows that I have been foolish ; and I shall suffer for it still, no doubt. Understand that I do not blame you. I daresay no other man would have been different in your place. I cannot say ; I do not know many men. Perhaps there is no man on earth whose love would have satisfied me. I do not know. I only know that

the love you give me does not satisfy me.

"You think that I am judging you too harshly, but it is not. I know how sorely you have been tried, and, Otto, listen—I know the conditions of your uncle's will, and how you lose your fortune if you marry beneath yourself in rank; and I have known it all along.

"I know that had I not spoken first you would have been true to your promise, but you would have done it with a lingering regret in your heart for the riches which I know you so dearly love. I could never have borne to be regarded as a stone round the neck—and that is what you are beginning to think.

"If I myself alone am not enough, then let me go, and I will go. Take your liberty, I return it you, and make a better use of it this time—a wiser use, the world will say.

"Oh that doubt which came into my mind that day when we talked on the veranda, months ago! Why did I not listen then? It would have been better; less pain than now. Forgive me for the pain I give you now—forgive me, Otto; you have more to forgive me than you know of.—For the last time,

"REATA."

When Otto had read through the letter word by word, he sank down just where he stood. There was no chair beside him, and he did not want one; he sank down on to his knees by the window, and put his hands over his face. A tempest of grief, of shame, swept over him—one of those storms that shake strong men and shatter weak ones. All his love for Reata rose up again—that love which for weeks past seemed to have lost its first freshness, to be diminishing and weak-

ening; it all came up now with a new and sudden life. Was it not like the last desperate flicker of a light that is expiring?—the grief of that moment so sharp that it seemed to himself his heart must break; the shame weighing more heavily from feeling far back in his mind a tinge of relief, which he would not acknowledge, but which, nevertheless, was growing and spreading.

Through all this last month, while he had been passing so many feverish nights and restless days, and so many hours on the lake, trying to drown his thoughts of discontent and unrest in a wild flirtation, which every day was making his position more intricate, he had in reality been free—virtually free. Reata had written those words, "I return you your liberty," and they were travelling over the sea towards him, coming every day nearer. And had he not been acting as if he knew it already, as if he had held his liberty in his hand? "I deserve to lose her, I deserve to lose her," he groaned aloud in his misery. But again in the midst of his misery came that tinge of relief; the matter was decided for him, Reata had decided it, fate had decided it. He himself would never have had the courage to renounce the treasure he had won; he could not have ruined the happiness of his life by his own work, even for the sake of the fortune he longed to possess. But now that it was taken from him, he must let it go; hardly even did the thought occur to him that by an effort he could regain it. He accepted Reata's decision as final, and would not attempt to struggle against it. Fain would he persuade himself that that effort, that any effort of his, must be vain, against Reata's resolute will.

Do not be too hard upon him, reader, if you are young, and think

that there is nothing but love to be lived for ; there are other things besides love in the world.

It was six months since he had looked upon her face—half a year ! Half a year ! What is half a year to the love that has strength to wait and courage to endure ? But half a year, what can it not do to the love of some men ? How weaken and efface it ! Half a year's separation, with its chances, its impressions, its broodings, and its troubles, and with the weight of common-sense and of worldly wisdom weighing in the balance against Love alone !

Next day, Christmas-day, Otto wrote his answer. He wrote it with a hand that was not quite steady, for there were strange broken curves at the end of some words ; but yet his letter was more legible, and a much more presentable production than hers had been. Men's emotions, be they ever so strong, rarely run away with them to the extent of making them forget grammar and spelling.

It was on returning from dinner that Otto wrote his letter, and the dinner to-day had been a louder and a merrier one than usual, with more talk and laughter, and also more wine than circulated on other days ; and Otto talked and laughed, and drank more wine than most of his comrades. There was a flush still on his face when he sat down to write ; and when, two hours later, he went out to put his letter in the post, the flush was not gone yet, rather it had deepened.

Old Boradembaki, meeting him in the street, himself in a very jovial humour, arrested Otto as he was brushing past without seeing him, by a resounding slap on his shoulder. "Well, Bodembach, enjoying your Christmas, are you ? That is right. I like to see a young fellow in good spirits."

"Yes, in excellent spirits," answered Otto, feeling as if, from sheer hysterical excitement, he must begin to laugh.

A month later this is the answer which Reata got to that short straggly letter of hers—that letter written in anger and sharp disappointment, which she had cried over, but which she had not yet regretted :—

"REATA, ADORED REATA,—Let me call you still by that name, though you have taken away from me the right to call you mine ; still you are and will remain the only woman whom I can ever adore. I could not have written to you last night, my thoughts were too tumultuously excited. I don't think I am much calmer to-day, but I have no right to keep you waiting, and it will take many days before I get calm again.

"I am writing this on Christmas-day, but it will be long after Christmas when you read it. It will be two months since you wrote those words by which you set me free. You have set me free—yes ; but, Reata, my heart is broken. It seems to me that by tearing the bond between us you have taken away all the light out of my life ; the light which sprang up that day on the plain when first I held you in my arms—the rain beginning to fall—Maraquita coming back. How well I remember each circumstance, each detail ! But no, I must not dwell on those things, or they will madden me. I must strike them out from my memory. The light went out yesterday with the first line of your letter.

"I cannot deny that it is my uncle Max's cruel will which separates us. If I attempted to deny it, it would be extravagant folly, and you would not believe me.

The money, which would have made our lives so happy together, now stands as a barrier between us. You know my opinions regarding birth and rank, and that I attach no importance to them. Such ridiculous prejudices do exist, though ; and they have stood in the way of many happy lots before, as they are now standing in the way of ours. It is heart-rending and absurd. As if you required the paltry distinction of a name to rank amongst the noblest and proudest of women ! To think that such things can have the power to break our hearts and shatter our happiness, is enough to craze my brain.

"You might have spared me that reproach, Reata. It was cruel, cruel of you to doubt the strength of my love ; that word of doubt almost cut me deeper than the pain of giving you up. Certainly I have no right to reproach you. From the only point of view from which you are able to judge, I may seem to deserve that doubt to be cast on me, but it is hard to bear coming from you. I will not attempt to convince you of how deeply I love you ; I have no longer got the right to do so, and better perhaps that you should never know. I love you so well that I wish I had never set eyes on your beautiful haunting face ; and I love you well enough to feel, in spite of my misery, a small drop of consolation at the thought that you are no longer chained to my miserable fortunes. You make light of poverty, I know ; that is because you have never really experienced it yourself. You do not know it, nor the power it has to weaken a love even as strong as ours. Rather would I bury our love in its full freshness, than live to see it dwindle and die amidst a life of hardships and privations.

"The fortune which my uncle's

will offers me is worthless to me without you, but I have not the right to refuse it. If I could think only of myself, I would do so ; but there are obligations and duties, springing from family ties, which fall very bitter sometimes, and very bitter they have fallen to me. Our family has suffered so much from poverty already ; and it would break my father's heart if I were, by foregoing the conditions of the will, to give up my fortune. I know that money alone will not make me happy, and I know very well now that there is no more happiness for me in this world, but I also know that happiness must be consolidated by money—that it cannot last if it is not sustained.

"It is no use writing about these things now ; nothing that I can say will be able to alter the hard fact that we must part. Another man, perhaps, might hope that the chances of life should bring him again near you, so as to look upon your beauty again with his eyes, although he is not able to possess it as his own ; but this is not my hope. I pray God that I may never be brought to see your face again ; the pain of seeing you after I have lost you, perhaps by another man's side, would be more than I could bear. Forgive me for ever having come between you and your peace, for having ever troubled the joyousness of your young life. You will be happy, no doubt, in some brighter lot ; but for me there can be no happiness, now that I have lost you. Never can I find peace at the side of any other woman. My life will henceforward be a blank, my heart feels dead ; its life is over, and I shudder at the thought of the long, lonely years before me.

"Forgive me again, Reata, my own darling, the adored of my heart—I must call you so once

more—forgive me again and forget me; forget that ever there lived such a miserable man as your heart-broken
OTTO.”

Extract from Reata's Diary.

“*January 28th.*—My poor, heart-broken Otto! and it is I who have broken his heart! What have I done? I have been trying to undermine my own happiness and his, and I have succeeded perfectly. I never till this letter knew how he really loves me,—so much more noble, so much more disinterested, than I thought him! He is afraid to drag me into poverty, and so gives up his own happiness. . . .

“It was wicked of me to reproach him; he said it cut him so deeply. What were the words I wrote? I shall never remember; my blood was boiling at the moment. I thought him indifferent because he consented to the delay, and because his letter was different from the one I had pictured in my mind.”

Here the letter which had been sketched out as a programme of what Otto was to write, was effaced by several very vigorous ink-lines, which extended over the principal historical events of the seventeenth century, thus innocently dragged into the ruin of the obnoxious letter.

“If only he had not spoken of it so coolly—if he had called me his darling only once more—I don't think I could have done it; or if only he had not thrown such cold water on the idea of my coming alone; calling it improper! I think it was that which stung me most. . . .

“Oh, Reata, what a miserable idiot you are! What a mess I am making of everything, of my whole life! Why was I not content with

his love as he gave it? It is only maniacs who aim at ideals! I have gone on playing and playing with my happiness till I have lost it; and I would give all the world to have it back again, now that it is too late. . . .”

Paper can only record what is written on it, not what it sees, or it would have told here how a girl's fair arms were flung over it, and a proud dark head bowed down, in the utter abandonment of stormy grief.

“Is it too late? . . .

“*January 31st.*—I have made up my mind it is not too late. I can still undo the consequences of my folly; but it will be very difficult. I wish I had never begun this miserable deceit. I will make him happy again, my poor heart-broken Otto! He is pining for me now; and he will lose his whole life in pining, if I do not do something to save him and myself from this misery. My own true knight! He will be true to me all his life—I know it, I feel it. He will never look or speak to another woman; does he not say so? . . .

“How difficult to know what to do! quite alone, quite alone, with no one to advise me, no one to speak to even; but I must do something. I know how it will be if I do not: he will sink under his grief; and some day, a few years hence, I will get a message to say, ‘Come to your dying Otto,’ and I will arrive just in time to receive his last breath. He will close his eyes kissing my hand, and murmuring, ‘I die, Reata, because I could not live without you.’ And I will go into a convent and cut off all my hair. No, no, it must not be; he must live and be happy again. What shall I do? . . .

“Of course I could write to him. A few words would make it all

right; so simple,—why do I not do it? Oh that I were not a Mexican, that I had not that proud blood in my veins! He has consented to give me up, and if I were dying I could not ask him to take me back. Can other women do such things? I cannot. . . . No, I will do something else. I shall go to Europe myself; I shall cross the ocean alone, quite alone. Highly improper, is it? He says so. I am doing it for him, but he is not to know that it is for him; anything rather than that. Why should I lose my love because I shrink from difficulties which can, which must be overcome? . . .

"Yes, we shall be happy again—happier, perhaps, than if nothing had ever parted us. I cannot tell him to come back to me; but the moment he sees me, he will come and be my own knight again! We shall meet again, and be happy. Yes; but where? when? In a garden, perhaps, with cactuses round us, and the birds will be singing. No, there are no cactuses in Europe; it will be lilac-bushes like that dried flower in the Schil-

ler volume. What will we say to each other? . . .

"OTTO (*with a start*). 'Has the sun dazzled my eyes, or do I see aright?'

"REATA (*with a little reserve*). 'You are not dazzled, and I am no ghost; it is I, Reata.'

"OTTO (*falling on his knees*). 'I love you; come and share my poverty. A crust of bread with you—'

"REATA (*interrupting*). 'Are you still my own true knight? Do you love me as you did before?'

"OTTO (*indignantly*). 'I love you a million times more than before! Can you think me capable of looking at another woman?'

"REATA (*dropping reserve*). 'Yes, you are my own true knight; then let us be happy!'

"OTTO. 'I begin to breathe again, the light is coming back into my life.' (Otto puts his arms round Reata; she lays her head on his shoulder, and whispers in his ear.) And then we are happy again—quite happy for the rest of our lives. I wish the day was come!"

GODFREY'S WHITE QUEEN.

CONCLUSION.—CHAPTER VII.

THE congregation poured out of Lealstone church one fine hot Sunday afternoon. Amongst the last came Audine, passing through the churchyard with a nod and a smile to every one, and a few words to many. She had many errands to do in the village: she stopped at one house to take a new book to an invalid; at another, to desire a child to come for a Sunday dinner for the old grannie. The heat of the day was passing into the sweet coolness of a September evening when she entered the park and crossed the grass on her way home.

The air was full of musical sounds of insect life and the choruses of birds; the sky was cloudlessly blue; the grass, brown and yellowed by the long autumn, crackled under her feet. In Audine's heart was nothing but joyous happiness: she sang as she went along, with the light glinting on her golden hair and checking her soft grey gown.

She took her way to a group of trees about half-way across the path, and sat down under their friendly shelter, not so much to rest as to enjoy. Audine gathered a handful of the notched grasses by which children tell their fortunes, and began lazily going through them.

"Coach, carriage, wheelbarrow, cart—tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor, gentleman, ploughboy, thief. Oh dear! I am to marry a thief and drive in a wheelbarrow!" Then she began to sing: her imagination, always at work, made her think herself an Orpheus singing to all things in nature. She leant back against the trunk of a tree, singing in her clear sweet voice, shutting her eyes, and smiling to herself like a very child.

She fancied the birds were listening and the grasshoppers pausing ere they took another stiff jump; perhaps a little field-mouse with its nose just outside its hole.

Audine was startled by the sound of a very loud sigh blown close to her, and she sat up in great astonishment: she was surrounded by cows. She had not observed them on the other side of the trees; and attracted by her singing—for they knew her well—they all came round her.

"Now I am a queen indeed," she thought to herself; and sitting upright, she began to sing to them more gaily than before, pushing away with her parasol one red cow with a large white face that wished to presume upon its intimacy by rubbing its great head on her shoulder.

Now, as Audine went on singing to her subjects, she saw something dark slowly rising up among the trees; and for one moment her heart died within her as she recognised the bull!

Oh, why had they not told her that he was in the park? What should she do? There was quite a quarter of a mile of park unbroken by trees between her and the house—should she run? It was too late for flight, for the great bull had risen to his feet, and slowly switching his tail, sauntered up to see from whence the strange sounds had proceeded that had so pleasantly stirred his slumbers.

Audine sat back, summoning up all her courage. She had been told that a bull will never face a determined human eye, and she threw all her determination into the gaze

with which she regarded him ; but he, sublime in his consciousness of strength, mistook her look altogether, and construed it into something very frightened, very appealing, very pathetic. He came close to her, put out his black muzzle, lowered his great broad brow, and gently touched her hand, saluting it with a gigantic sniff.

Audine gathered courage : an idea struck her. This great embodiment of strength—this creature of whom every one had bid her beware—was timid and shy as herself. She put out her hand : he drew back suddenly, and a red gleam shot into his eye. She did not move : another timid advance, and she found herself rubbing his great brow between his suspicious wild-looking eyes. By-and-by he moved lazily away, and began cropping the grass.

Audine sat quite still, and wondered how she was to get home. Though she felt a very friendly feeling towards the bull, she dared not cross the park alone in his society. He seemed quiet enough now, but by-and-by the gnats would come out ; they were already beginning to assemble in little active clouds, and some of the thinner-skinned cows moved and tossed their heads restlessly.

Audine's relief was great when she saw the cowman arriving to take in the cows that were ready to be milked, and she saw in his hand the long pole with a hook at the end, with which he was accustomed to lead about the bull.

The man's face turned as white as ashes when he caught sight of Audine ; but she signed to him not to speak to her till his charge was secured. That done, his terror and thankfulness poured out in words : " Oh, Miss Audine, I am that thankful ! He had escaped, he had, from the small field. Broken

right through the fence, he had ; he's that wild ! "

" He was very gentle with me," said Audine, comforting the man, whose teeth were chattering with terror of what might have been. The bull looked restless and fierce, and the man led him off at once ; and Audine, now that she stood up, feeling a little shaken, started to return home. She had not done with the cows yet ; they came with her, pressing to walk by her with their solemn faces. She walked on, proud of her strange body-guard, and occasionally obliged to scold the presumptuous white-faced cow, who would not keep her place.

Godfrey Neville saw her from the garden thus strangely accompanied, and in one moment had come down, leapt the railings, and joined her. On seeing him the four-footed friends stopped, slowly dropped off one by one, and began to nibble the grass ; the white-faced cow followed a little further, then stopped also, and giving vent to a prolonged moo, rejoined her companions.

Audine did not speak about her adventures, she felt too shy of the young sculptor : she glanced into his face as he walked beside her, and wondered at its profound melancholy, almost gloom.

" Is your mother not well ? " she said, suddenly. " I did not see her at church. "

" She did not go," he answered. " We have been taking a walk to refresh us after this sultry day. "

" The air is delicious now, at all events," said Audine, opening the gate.

" Do you have large congregations here ? "

" Pretty good—were you not at church this morning ? "

" No. "

Audine looked surprised.

" You are astonished," he said, smiling a little.

"I beg your pardon," she said, blushing.

"Ah, you are one of those who consider going to church an essential duty!"

"I do," she said, simply.

"It is a most mechanical operation, I think. I feel more religious by far lying on the grass looking up into the sky, with a cigar between my lips."

"I daresay one might, but there is a difference."

"What difference? Surely what makes me feel the best, is the best?"

"I don't think so at all," said she, rather vehemently. "If a duty has to be done, it should be done properly, not in an amateur way. It would be like a beautiful painting all out of drawing—you must have an outline to religious duties as well as to everything else."

Godfrey walked on saying nothing. Mrs Neville came to meet them from under the tree where she had been sitting.

"Audine, my dear child, it terrifies me to see you among all those great cows. I wish you would not go among them alone."

"But, aunt Mary, I know them all so well; they are as gentle as possible, excepting Christina, who is too affectionate."

"I wish that you had not tamed them; they frighten people by running up to see who it is when anybody passes."

"I was rather frightened to-day," said Audine, "for the bull was there."

"Oh, Audine!"

"He was indeed; close to me. I stroked his forehead."

"Thank God you are safe! Good heavens, how terrible! Were you very much frightened?"

"At first, but he was very gentle. I believe I could tame him like the others."

"I trust that you will not try," said Godfrey, earnestly. He looked at Audine with a great deal of admiration; but as he looked, suddenly every shade of colour fled out of his face, and he turned away his eyes with a strangely troubled expression. Mrs Neville saw it, and gave a deep sigh. She saw that he recognised in her face the resemblance to the White Queen.

CHAPTER VIII.

It was night, a hot moonlight night, and Mrs Neville could not sleep. In vain she tried all the devices well known to the sleepless—she paced her room, she drank water, she counted the designs on the paper on the wall. Sleep, nature's kind nurse, had deserted her to-night. At last she rose altogether and went out into the passage. The moon streamed in, and filled the house with pale mysterious light. She put out the candle she held and slowly walked to the window.

All was very silent, and she

leant her forehead against the cold glass and looked out on the colourless scene. Trees shut in the garden and hid from view the wide surrounding landscape with its living fires and rolling smoke. This little spot was all cold moonlight and shade.

As she looked, the troubles of her life seemed to press heavily on her heart; that yearning for the past, that agonising yearning "for the touch of a vanished hand, for the sound of a voice that is still," came on her, as it comes on those who have sorrowed, in the night-

season, when the body is worn and weary, and the spirit, strong and unshackled, seems to wrestle for communion with spirits that have already found their rest.

The weary woman bowed her head on her hand. Then softly began a sound that thrilled to her heart, a sound unparalleled in nature for its intense sweetness, for the joy it brings to the happy heart, for the balm and comfort to the sorrowful. Yet it was only the song of a little bird, only the wondrous melody of the nightingale.

When God made the world, He bestowed upon Day a beautiful harmony, a chorus of sound, various, joyous, triumphant, full of love and joy and praise. Then Night bowed her silver-veiled head and prayed also for music; and God, denying her harmony, bestowed on her a yet choicer gift—a melody almost divine.

Mrs Neville listened, and soft tears rushed to her eyes. She threw open the window and leant out; but, alas! the too human sound broke the spell, and, ending abruptly, the songster flew away.

Thick clouds scudded rapidly across the sky, and black shadows quickly chased each other over the earth; a cold breeze drove in her face, and the trees rustled with a sough as of coming rain, making the yellow leaves float sullenly down.

Mrs Neville was about to draw back and close the window, when she was startled by the sound of a door opening below. She leant over and looked down with a sudden thrill of fear. A cloud passed over the moon; when it floated away, she saw the figure of Godfrey standing in the garden. The sight struck her with intense terror; his face was white and drawn, his eyes fixed as though he saw some vision before him that was gradually drawing him on; his hands were out-

stretched before him, as if repelling from him that which he was compelled to follow. In this attitude he was slowly crossing the garden towards the trees.

She leant down with a sudden cry, "Godfrey, Godfrey!" but he paid no heed. Holding her breath, she could hear him utter words in hoarse, broken gasps—

"I deny it not! an ideal, an ideal! I deny it not!" Then, as if something answered him, he cried—

"No, no! not false! I am thy slave—I obey." Another pause, then—

"What! I deny thy thralldom! Do you not see that I am coming, coming with Castaletti?" He reached the trees, and in one instant was out of her sight. Once more she cried out, "Godfrey, Godfrey!" then tore open the door and ran down the stairs. It was pitch-dark, and the house-door resisted all her efforts to open it. Blindly she rushed to the morning-room; in the darkness her hands strayed wildly over the panels; she could not find the handle. At last succeeding, she rushed in; one of the long windows was wide open; and through it, she saw two men entering. The foremost was Godfrey, walking still with his eyes fixed straight before him. Holding tight hold of his arm came the other, who put Mrs Neville aside with his free hand, muttering, as he did so, in the familiar voice of Roger Girwood—

"Wait!"

And the two passed straight on and up-stairs, and the unhappy mother sank down on the sofa, while gasps, almost convulsive, shook her from head to foot. It seemed hours, though in reality not more than ten minutes, before the door opened again, and Roger Girwood returned. He held a candle

in his hand, and by its light Mrs Neville saw his flushed and careworn face.

"You here, Roger!" she exclaimed. "What brings you here on this horrible night?" and she gasped again. Girwood put down the candle, and drawing the back of his hand backwards and forwards over his brow, he said—

"Do not be too much alarmed, ma'am. Mr Godfrey has often walked in his sleep."

"Sleep! was he asleep? But the awful expression of his eyes!"

"He has very fearful dreams," said the old man, sorrowfully.

"And how came you here, my good, kind friend?"

"I have been here some days," he answered simply. "He knows nothing of my presence, and we must not tell him. I have a room in Lealstone, but I have been up here and seen him every night at the window of his room."

"Has he ever come out before?"

"Once or twice."

"Heaven help us all! Roger, my heart is breaking."

"Time enough for that when there is no cure possible."

"He grows more like his father every day," said the poor mother. Girwood looked at her earnestly.

"Something must be done," he said.

"But what? what can we do? I suppose it is still this horrible hallucination?"

"Yes, always the same. Something must be done to shake his faith in it. Can Mr Castaletti be found? More than ever am I convinced that it is all a diabolical trick of that Italian scamp. If he could be found, I would shake every breath out of his body, but I would force him to confess it."

"But what motive?"

"Who knows? I tell you what, ma'am," cried the old man, vehe-

mently, "something must and shall be done."

"Shall we have the statue destroyed? That creature I hate, in spite of her extraordinary beauty."

"A thousand times, no! It seems to me all-important that she should exist—exist to prove to him that she is nothing but a carved piece of stone. No, no; try to replace her image by a real living, breathing sweetheart. Bless my soul! all the poor lad wants is commonplace common-sense."

"But his beautiful visionary nature aspires——"

"Look you here, ma'am," said Girwood, harshly, "if you encourage or even countenance this visionary nature, your son will end in a madhouse!"

"Roger, you dare to speak to me like this!"

"I dare anything for my dear young master, anything for his father's son;" and tears rose to the eyes of the honest stone-cutter. Mrs Neville wrung her hands.

"Oh, I know you are faithful! I can depend upon you, my good, my only friend. Make any suggestion; I care not what it may be, I will carry it out."

"Can we not persuade him that the statue he calls his ideal is only a pre-vision of some sweet young lady destined to become his bride?"

Mrs Neville suddenly clasped her hands, exclaiming—

"Dare I?"

"What! do you think you have hit upon a plan?"

"It is too wild, too impossible."

"Tell it me, ma'am."

Mrs Neville lowered her voice, and they continued to talk together almost in whispers, until the first streaks of dawn began to glow in the sky.

Mrs Neville, her face grey and drawn, as though ten years had been added to her life, closed the

long windows upon Roger's retreating figure, replaced blind and curtain, and softly went up-stairs to her son's room. She opened the door and stole to his bedside. Godfrey lay sleeping a sleep so still that she bent down to listen for his breathing, and passed her hand over his heavy hair. For one moment she looked upwards. She made a movement as if she would have knelt, then her face sank into her hands, and she uttered a low moan, and her heart sent out a cry of pain. "Oh, my boy, my boy! my love for you is idolatry. I dare not, dare not pray, lest God should put it into my heart that I may not do evil, even for so inestimable a good. I cannot pray, I dare not pray."

More forlorn than at any time of her life Mrs Neville crept away to her bed.

Every day passed quickly to Audine. The hours were scarcely long enough for all the occupations of her bright young life. Since Godfrey had been in the house, she had not seen so much of Mrs Neville, partly from a feeling of shyness, partly from not liking to disturb her friend in the enjoyment of her son's society.

On the morning after Mrs Neville's conversation with Girwood, Audine was up early, long before breakfast, gathering a handful of gardenias out of one of the hot-houses. She met Godfrey as she returned towards the house, and stopped to speak to him.

"I cannot shake hands," she said, laughing, "for both are occupied."

One was full of flowers, the other engaged in keeping in order the numerous dogs that surrounded her.

"What a beautiful Diana you would make!" cried Godfrey, suddenly.

"Why should you not sculpt—what is the word?—sculpture me?"

"No, no," he said, very sadly; "I have done with sculpture."

"You are suffering from having worked too hard," said Audine. "Never mind; all great men go through the same; genius always suffers."

Godfrey sighed heavily. He looked so ill and depressed that Audine was grieved.

"You have indeed been doing too much," she said, in her sweet sympathetic voice. "You must rest here, and only amuse yourself with some little trifling thing. My Psyche would make a pretty little statuette," she said, fondly patting the head of the shivery little Italian greyhound.

"Rather a pretty piece of Dresden china."

"Yes. Is your mother up yet?"

"No; I have seen her. She could not sleep last night, and she said she was very tired."

"Oh, I am so sorry! perhaps I had better not disturb her."

"You disturb her! Oh no; you are like the fresh dew on a parched and thirsty land."

The colour mounted into Audine's face, and calling her dogs round her she went on to the house. Godfrey stood leaning against a tree, looking after her with a strange look on his face—a hunted look, as of one who would fain flee from something, but sees no loophole for escape.

Audine entered her friend's room; the shutters were half closed, and in the dim light she saw Mrs Neville lying in bed in an attitude of the deepest dejection, her face turned to the wall and hidden on her outstretched arms. She gave a deep sigh, almost a moan, as the girl came in. Audine thought she had never heard so sad a sound. She started forward, threw herself on

her knees beside the bed, and seizing Mrs Neville's hand, she cried—

"Oh, aunt Mary, has something dreadful happened? What is the matter?"

She turned round quickly.

"Audine, my child, you startled me."

"Are you ill?"

"No, no; nonsense! Why should I be ill? I am quite well; and what should have happened?" She smiled a strange forced smile; she put her pillows together, and sat upright in bed with flushed cheeks, and eyes bright and glittering as if with fever.

"I was just thinking of you, Audine," she went on.

"Then I am very glad I came. Will the smell of the gardenias be too much for you?"

"No, they are delicious. Put them down here on my hands; their cool petals are so pleasant to touch."

"I am sure you are feverish," said Audine, anxiously.

"No, my dear, I am as well as possible. Do not kneel on the floor like that—it fidgets me. Draw up that arm-chair by my bed; I want to look at you."

Audine did as she was told.

"Did you meet Godfrey as you came in?" she asked, fixing her eyes on Audine's face.

"Yea, I did."

"And how do you think he looked?"

"Very ill—tired and ill," said Audine.

"Ah, poor boy! no wonder he is ill!"

"He has overworked himself," said Audine, timidly.

"Yea, overworked and overstrained for a long time; and besides—Audine," she said, very suddenly, "do you know what being in love is?"

Audine blushed rosy red. "Of course I do, aunt Mary," she said.

"Have you ever painted a vision in your mind of the man you would like to marry?"

"Oh yes," she said, eagerly. "My hero must be like Gunnar the Iclander, grand and tall, with a long golden beard. He must be noble and chivalrous; and must love me dearly."

"A charming ideal!" said Mrs Neville, bitterly. "A mere great pink-and-white doll, with no genius and hardly any intellect."

"Intellect I should certainly require," said Audine, smiling; "but genius makes its possessors so unhappy, that I do not think it a very enviable gift."

"Do you know that you are talking nonsense, child?" cried Mrs Neville, with her cheeks now flushed, and her hand trembling. "Who are you that you should deny the advantage of such a heaven-sent gift?"

"I do not, indeed I do not deny it. On the contrary, I admire it beyond anything in the world. But, aunt Mary, it makes me think of those beautiful Indian insects which shine more and more when they are in pain, and whose brilliancy is the greatest when suffering is at its height."

"A very fine sentiment, Audine!"

The colour rushed to Audine's cheeks, the tears to her eyes, at the sarcasm. Mrs Neville went on—

"And do you mean to say, that if an angel came to you with two gifts in his hand—one Genius, with its crowns of fame, glory, triumph, and pain; the other Happiness, with its attendant peace and calm, domesticity and repletion—you would choose Happiness?"

"If both came from God, and I might serve God equally with

either, I would," said Audine, seriously.

"I had thought better of you, you tame-spirited little thing!"

"Aunt Mary, why are you so harsh to me to-day?" and Audine hid her face to hide the tears that would come.

Mrs Neville sighed impatiently. "If happiness is so pleasant a thing," she said, suddenly changing her tone, and speaking with a sort of forced lightness that puzzled Audine, "I want to talk to you about a scheme for amusing our neighbours."

"Do tell me." Audine looked up again brightly.

"I want to have some *tableaux vivants*!"

"Quite delightful! I should enjoy it of all things. We will ask the very prettiest people."

"I have thought of several good subjects," said Mrs Neville, speaking very fast. "What do you think of a scene from the Hugue-

nots, and Rebecca and Rowena, and Nydia and Glaucus. One thing I have quite set my heart on." She stopped as if out of breath.

"Yes, dear aunt Mary?"

"I want to dress you up like Godfrey's White Queen."

Mrs Neville fell back upon her pillows, watching Audine's face.

"Very well," said the girl, laughing, "if you do not think it too bold and presuming."

"No; it will make a pretty tableau. I have photographs. Besides, I know the drapery so well, I am sure I can manage it. Now, if you go, dear, I will get up, and we will begin our programme after breakfast."

"Oh, what fun! what fun! I must have out the costume-box and see what I can find."

She stooped to kiss Mrs Neville, then rose up with a little cry, "Oh, my poor flowers!"

They were quite crushed, bruised, and broken.

CHAPTER IX.

Audine and Mrs Neville spent some days entirely in the preparation for their entertainment.

There were very few people invited to act: the two handsome daughters of a neighbour; two cousins of the Fitzjameses, who lived about twelve miles off; Godfrey Neville; and an old Indian colonel, with a picturesque white beard, who lived close by;—but Audine resolved to do wonders. The Davenportes, who were tall and dark, appeared in various characters, as Rebecca and Rowena, Minna and Brenda, &c.; Godfrey made a handsome Glaucus, with fair little Ella Fitzjames for a Nydia; Mrs Neville herself made a splendid Vandyke.

When the day came, the carefully darkened room was crowded

with guests, and Audine, peeping through the thick baize curtain, felt her heart beat fast.

The first scene was a great success: the performers stood admirably, the lights were perfectly arranged, and a storm of clapping followed.

The pauses were filled up by music, picture succeeded picture, and the evening began to draw towards a close.

"Godfrey," whispered his mother behind the scenes, "I wish you would go among the spectators now, for I want your artist-eye to judge of the effect of this last tableau, which I have arranged myself."

Godfrey looked at her affectionately.

"How pale you are, mother! do not overtire yourself." And he went out and seated himself among the audience.

There was an unusually long pause this time, and the music played on valiantly, then it became soft, and the curtain drew up suddenly. A low cry, hardly louder than an exclamation, burst from Godfrey's lips, and he bent forward, with his eyes fixed on the tableau, and his hands grasping the arms of his chair almost convulsively.

"What is it? what is it?" he muttered, with clenched teeth.

Audine stood on a cunningly devised white pedestal. She was dressed entirely in white; the long folds hung as white and still-looking as marble itself; one of her hands held a long white veil over her head, and the shadow over her face concealed the warm hue of life, and made her a very statue, wonderfully like the White Queen.

The tableau was greeted with a perfect storm of applause; so enthusiastic were they all that they did not notice Mrs Neville's appearance, looking very pale and nervous, nor did they see the form of Roger Girwood half concealed in a corner, and watching with intense interest. Godfrey never moved.

The music played on very softly, then Mrs Neville advanced in front of the stage and said a few words; the buzz of applause ceased, and holding out her hand to Audine, the statue descended from her pedestal, and joined her friends.

The mother looked round the room anxiously. Godfrey had disappeared.

The guests and the actors now mingled together, the lights were lit rapidly, and dancing began.

Then Mrs Neville stole away from her guests, and sought her

son. She found Godfrey in his own room, sitting by the table, with his face hidden in his hands. Gently she laid her hand upon his shoulder: "Godfrey!" she said, "Godfrey!"

He looked up, his eyes were haggard and wild.

"Godfrey, tell me, what are you thinking? Why do you not speak?"

"Ah me!" he said. "Oh, mother, what has come over me? I cannot believe the sight of my own eyes—that statue!"

"Yes."

"She is the real queen of my life. Is she not the White Queen? Hera come down upon earth, to whom I am wed with a golden ring!"

"That statue was Audine."

"Audine!—Audine!" and his head fell on his hands again.

The mother's blood ran cold. Were not reason and delusion battling for her son to-night. She must, she would save him.

An hour passed by, then Godfrey raised his head suddenly; the whole expression of his face had changed, had become softened and intensely weary.

"Mother," he said, laying his head on her shoulder, "I seem to have had a terrible dream. My White Queen," he passed his hand over his brow, "is only a statue."

"A beautiful piece of marble, Godfrey," said his mother, eagerly.

"And the real White Queen is Audine, a lovely woman who can smile, and cry, and breathe."

"Ay, and laugh and rejoice, Godfrey,"—she was watching anxiously.

Then he suddenly sprang to his feet.

"What a fool I have been, mother!" he exclaimed. "But the ring—can you explain to me that horrible mystery?"

"Listen to me, Godfrey. Girwood has been examining the statue. Are you listening?"

"Yes, yes."

"When you left off your work, how many fingers were carved?"

"All; only the palm of the hand was untouched."

"On which did you place your ring?"

"I do not know—I was mad."

"Listen, Godfrey: could not those fingers have been removed, and the block which was to be reduced to the palm of the hand, converted into a new hand with closed fingers? could it have been done in a single night?"

"But I was there; I must have heard."

"You were drugged, Godfrey; we have evidence to prove that."

"But who could have treated me so? I have no enemy on earth."

"Castaletti, I fear."

"But why? Mother, I cannot believe it."

"The drug was bought by him, Girwood has discovered; and the motive . . . was jealousy: he loved Audine."

"Oh, mother, mother! what a strange story you are telling me!"

"You are worn out and weary, Godfrey; sleep now, and to-morrow, please God, you will be quite well."

Mrs Neville went down-stairs, but found the last guest departed, and the house shut up and dark: when she returned, Godfrey was asleep. In the morning he awoke, calm, refreshed, and restored to his own mind.

Mrs Neville very carefully avoided any allusion to the past: anxiously afraid of awakening his lumbering memory—she kept him always with her, and incessantly occupied; she felt that her work was as yet only begun.

CHAPTER X.

Several weeks passed during which Mrs Neville continued to throw Audine and her son constantly into each other's society; as the winter came on and the weather prevented a life spent much out of doors, they were of necessity constantly together; and Mrs Neville, who was a really clever woman, spared no endeavour to draw them out, to lead them into arguments and discussions, and to make them daily more familiar companions. Mrs Burns saw and was uneasy; after many debates within herself she made up her mind as to her duty, and wrote to Colonel Fitzjames.

Mrs Neville thought that all was going as she wished, that she would be spared any further wiles to bring about what she so earnestly desired, so her disappointment was keen,

when one morning Godfrey came into her room, and said abruptly, "Mother, I am going to London; I must go back to my work."

"What is the matter, my dear boy?"

"The matter?" he jumped up almost fiercely and pacing up and down the room, "Mother, am I not human? Can I live under the same roof as Audine and not love her?"

"Godfrey!" faltered Mrs Neville, as white as a sheet. "Why not? why should you not love her?"

"I love that beautiful heavenly child? Oh no! I am not fit for that. I must go."

"But, Godfrey, what barrier should stand between you? Why are you afraid? Is it that you think you cannot win her heart?"

"You torture me. Do you think

nothing of this horrible hallucination (if it was a hallucination) which has stood between me and my rest? O heavens! even now my brain reels. I cannot be certain that I am not still in the power of Hera come down from above—that I have not seen her white hand close on my golden ring."

"Hush, hush!"

"I know it is not so," he went on; "I know it! I know it! But sometimes in agony it comes over me, do I know it? can I be certain? I believe I am not all right here," he said with deep pathos, pressing his hand on his brow. "It must be something wrong—only in her presence, when I see her sweet face, and hear the sound of her voice, all delusion vanishes away, and I know that she is a beautiful mortal, and that I love her with a passing love."

"Surely, then, all is well, Godfrey," said his mother, eagerly. "Audine is very young; no one yet has spoken to her of love; her heart is free—she will not be hard to win."

"Mother, mother, do not tempt me."

"What do you mean, Godfrey? your hesitation is incomprehensible to me. If you love the child, the most simple, straightforward thing is to win her heart, and make her your bride. Night and day I pray God for that."

There was a pause; when Godfrey spoke again his voice was deprecating and timid.

"Do you think, mother, that I shall end as my father did?"

"No, no."

"Do you remember the misery of your life, my own dear mother? the bitter tears I have seen you shed when I was only a boy?"

"Godfrey!" her voice was choked.

"I love Audine so dearly that I

dread such a future for her more than I could express."

"You are not like your father."

"I am becoming so," he answered, rather wildly. "I used to feel when he told me of the strange and terrible things he saw, that they would one day be visible to me also; but it is different with me. When the White Queen comes in and stands before me, she is not a vision of terror but a divine beauty; there is nothing fearful in her aspect: she brings all beautiful and holy thoughts to my mind. The old attributes I strove to represent in her—the peace, and joy, and purity, and love—they float through my mind like a strain of heavenly music, and when it passes away, my White Queen is no longer Hera, but Audine. I have not disentangled truth from fancy yet, mother."

Mrs Neville sighed heavily.

"Do not disappoint me, Godfrey," she said, with a trembling voice. "Do not disappoint me so grievously as to give up your hope of winning Audine. I have hoped for it for so long."

"Mother, can you be so cruel to her?"

"I care nothing for her in comparison with you; stay, Godfrey—hear me"—for he had drawn away his hand abruptly at her words; "I did not mean that. I love her dearly; it is that I do love her so dearly that I long for her to be my own daughter."

"And yet you would wed her to me, one you love dearly, when you know in your heart that you may be dooming her to untold misery."

"You must not, you shall not say that, Godfrey! These delusions are your own imagination; use your will, be a man, determine to shake them off."

"Perhaps; some years hence."

Mrs Neville felt almost in despair. Godfrey began again.

"I am right, mother. I will go back to my studio and work hard, and when I feel that I have rid myself of this horror that hangs over me, I will come back."

"You will be too late, Godfrey. Audine is young and lovely: when her brother comes back she will go into the great world; she will be admired and sought and won, while you are still battling with a dream."

"Surely, mother, I am right."

Mrs Neville's face suddenly grew very white, and she pressed her hands tightly together. Bending down her head she spoke very fast—

"Godfrey, have you ever thought of one thing? You have seen a great deal of Audine, have been constantly with her, have betrayed your feelings towards her more than you know of,—suppose she has also learnt to love you?"

"Good heavens!"

"I only say suppose; but if it was so, my boy! Godfrey, Godfrey! if it was so!"

He covered his face with his hands; she tried to force them away.

"Tell me, would you still go?" she said.

"Do you think it is true, mother?" he asked, suddenly. "You cannot be deceiving me; it would be too cruel."

"I only said suppose," she said, trying to speak lightly.

"But do you think so? Has she given you any reason to think so? Tell me, I entreat."

"I . . . I think so;" her dry lips could hardly articulate the lie. Godfrey's whole face lit up with an indescribable look of rapture.

"Oh, mother!" he cried, with that joy radiant in his eyes. "Oh, if I have indeed won her love, my guardian angel! my sweet queen!

May God shower down all His choicest gifts on her head, and bless me, me also, for her sake."

He threw himself on a stool at her feet, and taking her hands began to question her eagerly.

"Tell me, what makes you think so? can it be true. Tell me all you can. Oh, is such a joy really to come to me?"

"I can tell you nothing, Godfrey," said his mother, forcing a smile. "When the time comes, you must ask all this of herself; all I beg of you is, that you submit to be guided by me."

"May I not go to her, and tell her how I love her?"

"No, no—not yet; leave all to me. She is so young, Godfrey; give her time and be patient. Now, for the first time, begin your suit, and all will be well."

"If she will only give me some tiny sign of encouragement!"

"I will tell her you are going; and if she asks you to stay, will that be enough?"

"Enough! more than enough for me. I would go to the far end of the world to please her."

Mrs Neville rose suddenly; a feeling came over her that she could bear this no longer. She had taken the first step—there was no retreat possible now.

"I will go to her at once," she said, and left the room.

Audine was half asleep by the fire, reading. She opened her eyes when Mrs Neville came in.

"I am so comfortable, aunt Mary," she said, sleepily.

"I have come to ask you to do something for me!" said Mrs Neville, sitting down.

"With all my heart."

Audine was awake in a second. Mrs Neville went to the wash-hand-stand, poured out a glass of water and drank it down, then she came back to Audine.

"The fact is, my dear, that Godfrey is going away."

"Now—at once?"

"Yes; and, Audine, I do not want him to go. He has been ill, and is not well yet, and I am so anxious to keep him with me."

"Dear aunt Mary!" cried Audine, "what can I do? Can you not persuade him?"

"I cannot persuade him, but perhaps you could; he would do anything for you."

"Oh, I will ask him, of course," said Audine; "but I am afraid that if he will not listen to you, he will not to me."

"It is quite a different thing," said Mrs Neville, decidedly.

"Yes; he might not refuse from courtesy; but still I must not bore him if he really wants to go."

"My dear, dear child—bore him! He would go to the end of the world to serve you."

Audine looked startled, then blushed rosy red at the thought which had passed through her mind.

"I think it will bore him;" but Mrs Neville would not let her draw back.

"You have promised to ask him," she said, eagerly.

"Indeed, dear, I want him so very much to stay; it is so important both to him and to me."

"Very well, aunt Mary," said Audine; "I will run down and ask him."

Mrs Neville's words, or rather the manner in which they had been uttered, awoke Audine's self-consciousness. She felt uncomfortable and shy of the young sculptor; the shyness imparted a certain dignity to her slight figure, as she slowly went down to the drawing-room and up to the chimney-piece against which he was leaning.

"I hope you will not go away," she said, gently.

"I think it would be much better that you should stay."

"You wish me to stay?" he said, very eagerly.

"Your mother wishes it; we both do," she answered. He was looking at her so earnestly that the colour again mantled in her cheek, and she turned away her face and looked into the fire.

Godfrey made one step forward. "Audine," he said, softly—then stopping himself very suddenly, he left the room.

CHAPTER XI.

"Burnie," said Audine to her nurse, as she was brushing her hair that night, "when a man falls in love, how does he show it?"

Mrs Burns looked considerably startled, but she preserved her presence of mind.

"That depends, my dear, on the gentleman; some show it a great deal more than others."

"Oh, I never saw any one in love, Burnie, so I want to know how you know whether they are in love or not."

"It is not always very easy to say, Miss Audine. Some talk very

much, some get very stiff, and some very flighty; some never speak at all. I've known one who would go all the way round the room, touching every chair and table in it, rather than walk straight; and one I knew who was always walking backwards instead of standing still."

Audine laughed.

"And are these the only signs? How are they to be distinguished from ordinary shyness? Is there no other means of telling?"

"Very little else until the proposal comes off, Miss. Sometimes they use the young lady's Christian

name by mistake, which betrays who is always in their thoughts."

Audine started.

"But you hold your head a little more steady, my dear, for a good last brush. Whatever's put gentlemen into your mind to-night, dear?"

"Oh, nothing!"

"You will know all about it when your time comes, Miss Audine; but don't you go thinking about nonsense things when the Colonel is away."

"I wish he would come back, Burnie," she sighed.

"Well, the best part of the year is over, and I should not be a bit surprised if he was home sooner than you think."

"How delightful it would be!" cried Audine.

Godfrey Neville began his suit. He lingered about the drawing-room; he sought Audine's opinion and advice on every subject; he listened to her with deference; he followed her movements with wistful eyes, and tried hard to persuade himself that his mother was right, and that the new reserve and shyness which she showed towards him were only the results of an unknown deep feeling.

Meanwhile he found his mind gradually clearing itself from the strange medley of fancies which had tormented him so long, and one only object engrossed his thoughts.

Mrs Neville watched it all with painful interest. In every way she endeavoured to bring the two into conversation; and when she and Audine were by themselves she would always be talking of Godfrey—of his beauty, his genius, the kindness of his disposition. Audine felt soon nothing but a great wish to get away from Lealstone, and a longing for her brother which often made her very unhappy. She was oppressed by Godfrey's atten-

tions, and longed to be freed from them; and it required all her loving sympathy with the feelings of others not to show Mrs Neville that the constant conversation about her son wearied her. She could not understand what it was that made Mrs Neville watch her so anxiously with such scrutinising eyes.

One day Godfrey was obliged to dine out. He would have refused, but his mother would not permit it—she thought it better to have Audine quietly to herself for once.

When she heard of it, Audine childishly skipped for joy—she could not conceal her pleasure.

They counter-ordered the late dinner and substituted a comfortable tea, over which Mrs Neville and Audine became quite merry and natural again, and Audine felt happier than she had done for weeks. But it was not to last: tea over, they returned to the drawing-room, and checking Audine's impulse to sit on the hearth-rug and romp with the dogs, Mrs Neville drew her down on the sofa, saying that she had something very serious to say to her.

Poor Audine turned pale; she dreaded what was coming, and she put her hands over her face and cried, "Oh, not to-night, aunt Mary—not to-night!"

"Do not be childish, Audine," said Mrs Neville, rather sharply. "I really must talk to you."

Audine withdrew her hands, and looking up wistfully said, "Very well."

"Audine," began Mrs Neville, solemnly, "you are no longer a child; you have arrived at an age at which a girl begins to acquire power over the happiness of others."

Audine lowered her face.

"My Audine, that power is a gift of great responsibility. Do you understand me?"

"Yes."

"And cannot be too carefully used," went on Mrs Neville, restlessly twisting her fingers together. "If a man's whole happiness depends upon a woman, it is a great responsibility for her; if she has encouraged him, the responsibility is much greater, is it not?"

"Yes," again murmured Audine.

"And you have done that, my darling; your sweet ways and looks have taught Godfrey to love you. It has made me so very happy," she went on, with a trembling voice, "for it will make you my own dear little daughter."

But Audine, with a dignity all her own, had drawn back, and was looking at her friend with her clear eyes. "You are mistaken, aunt Mary," she said. "You do not mean what you say."

"I do mean it. I know how very young you are, and I feared that if Godfrey were himself to speak to you first, you would——"

"I would answer him as I answer you, aunt Mary."

"And how is that, my child? My dear child, can you love him?"

"Oh no, no."

"Then all this time you have been deceiving my poor boy, heartless, cruel girl!—leading him on to his own destruction; walking with him, talking to him, and letting him believe that you saw and valued his love."

Audine became very white, and all her courage fled; she trembled as if caught in a trap.

"Oh, aunt Mary, I know nothing of these things! Did I encourage him? What does it mean? Oh, I hope not."

"You have taught him to love you as few men love; you have destroyed his future, ruined his hopes. Oh, Audine!" and Mrs Neville caught her hands and looked eagerly into her face.

"What can I do?" cried the poor

child. "Indeed I did not mean it. I do not love him. I never can."

Mrs Neville looked at her with a look almost of hatred in her face; then a moan burst from her lips, and she said, "Oh, what a fatal thing love for you is, Audine! first Castaletti, and now my Godfrey!"

Now Mrs Neville was terrified at the effect of her words: every trace of colour fled from Audine's lips, her eyes became distended.

"What!" she gasped. "What did you say?"

"I said," repeated Mrs Neville, wildly, "that the love of you will be as fatal to Godfrey as it was to Castaletti."

"God help me!" cried Audine, with a piteous cry; and she fell forward in a death-like fainting-fit, striking her head violently on the marble fender. Greatly terrified as she was, Mrs Neville would not ring for help—her work was but half done: idolatrous in her love for her son, to Audine she was pitiless. She laid her on the sofa, bathed her forehead with eau-de-Cologne, and sat fanning her eagerly until she opened her eyes. Audine looked round her wildly.

"Was it love for me? Oh, aunt Mary, was it that that killed him? did he go from me to that horrible death?" and she clung to Mrs Neville, trembling violently.

"It was unfortunate," said Mrs Neville, with dry lips; "but the effect of love is overwhelming to some men; it has driven them to all sorts of desperate actions."

"Was it that?"

"I will not deceive you, Audine; it may not have been his body that was found—the condition of the——"

"Oh, stop, stop!" cried Audine, shuddering. "How shall I bear it? what can I do?"

Mrs Neville bent towards her,

and whispered, in words that sounded almost like a hiss—

"Save Godfrey from such a fate."

Audine sank back, pressing her hands convulsively over her brow.

"Aunt Mary," she cried, "I have no mother!"

Mrs Neville hesitated for one moment, during which the good battled with the evil in her heart; then she said, in a voice which the very emotion she strove to control made very cold—

"I would not urge you for the world, Audine; you must act of your own free will. You shall never say that I influenced your decision."

"Will you not help me?"

"I cannot; I am too much interested, I am too much terrified when I think of what the result of your refusal might be—it takes away my power to help you."

Audine rose to her feet panting.

"Give me time to think," she said.

"Yes, yes, take time, but do not keep me too long in suspense; tell me soon, Audine."

"I will."

"And oh, my dear child," cried Mrs Neville, following her to the door, "ask no counsellor but your own heart; do not talk to your nurse about it—promise me."

"Very well," said Audine, and she went up-stairs. She threw herself on her bed, covering her face with her hands, trying to think; but only one overwhelming thought was with her.

"She says it was my doing, my fault; he killed himself for my fatal love! I am guilty of his death." Then through the darkness she could fancy she saw the satyr-like face of Castaletti, always watching her. Her head ached terribly: she was unconscious of the blow she had received in falling, and wondered vaguely at the violent pain. A grievous sense of self-pity

came over her—she felt as if she had lost all the happiness of her youth, that now she must carry with her a regret and horror to her dying day. What should she do? Then with a thrill almost of bodily pain she remembered Mrs Neville's words, "Save Godfrey from such a fate." From such a fate! Would he also die, and for her sake? A terror of herself came over her: she rose hurriedly from her bed and lit the candles; she glanced at herself in the glass, and was startled by the white face she saw with bloodless lips and distended eyes. She hastily smoothed her hair and went swiftly along the passage to Burns's room, where her old nurse was sitting half asleep, waiting for her young mistress's bell.

Audine put a strong restraint upon herself; the strength of her feelings made her act well; but had Burns been fully awake, she could not have been deceived in her child.

"Burnie," said Audine, leaning on the back of her chair, "I have been reading a very strange novel; it has made me nervous. The rejected lover killed himself. Tell me, Burnie, do such things happen in real life?"

"My dear, I have often told you not to go reading those sorts of nonsense before going to bed. Lovers indeed!"

"Do they ever in real life?"

"I never knew but one fret much, Miss Audine, and scores of others who married another woman within a year."

"And that one case?" faltered Audine.

"It was a peculiar one, my dear. The girl was a neighbour of ours at home, Hester Brown, and very pretty, and she led him on to think she liked him above a bit, and then made a fool of him at last. He

was not over-wise, poor lad, and he went quietly away to the river. He might have fallen in—perhaps he did—but all the neighbours put it down to her score.”

“Oh, Burnie!”

Burns jumped up at the tone of her voice. “What is it, my child? what is it?”

“Do not keep me—let me go; I must go down-stairs.”

“My dear, you had much better come to bed.”

“No, no—let me go,” and Audine broke from her detaining hands and ran down-stairs.

Mrs Neville was still in the drawing-room, but the lights were all put out save one hand-candle and the remains of the fire. Audine went swiftly up to her.

“I am come,” she said.

“And you consent, my Audine, my child?”

“Yes.”

“You will be my Godfrey’s wife, the joy and happiness of us all?”

“Yes.”

“Let me kiss you, Audine. How happy you have made me, you little know.”

But Audine recoiled from her touch.

At that moment the hall-door opened with a latch-key; some one came in—they could hear his footsteps.

“Is that Castaletti?” said Audine, suddenly.

“Audine, you are dreaming! It is Godfrey. Wait here, my darling; I will send him to you.”

And she left the room.

Audine retreated into the very farthest corner, pressing back against the wall with her hands clasped on her breast, and waited. One moment—it seemed an hour—and Godfrey came in.

“Is it true, Audine? Does my mother say truth indeed?”

“Yes.” Again that fatal word.

“And you will be all my own, my darling—the light of my life?”

Audine could bear no more; and when he would fain have poured out to her all the love of his heart, she tore herself from his hands, and fled from him in terror too great for words.

Godfrey and his mother sat up late that night, talking in eager tones.

CHAPTER XII.

When the Nevilles met at breakfast on the following morning, Audine did not appear. More than an hour passed, and Mrs Neville became uneasy at her absence. At last she got up, left off pretending to eat her breakfast, and went up-stairs to see what made Audine so late.

At the door of her room Mrs Burns met her, looking exceedingly stiff and severe.

“I think you had better not go in, ma’am,” she said, very coldly. “Miss Audine has been very ill all night.”

“Ill! Have you sent for the doctor?”

“I have taken that liberty, ma’am. Indeed you had better not go in till he comes.”

“Why did you not come for me?” said Mrs Neville. “It was very wrong of you.”

At this moment Audine called out, in a high clear voice, “Aunt Mary!” And Mrs Neville pushed past the nurse, and went in.

The young girl was sitting up in bed, all her long brown hair floating behind her; and she was speaking in a very rapid, confused way. She caught hold of Mrs Neville’s hands.

“Nothing, nothing can save

him!" she said. "They are going to throw him down the shaft; and all the neighbours blame me, and say it was love for me that killed him. Oh, George, George! I wish he would not watch me so." She clung suddenly to Mrs Neville. "He watches me, half crouching down; and I know he is there even when I am asleep, and he says such strange things. The White Queen! Godfrey has a bride already. Who said that? And why did he tell me? What is Godfrey's bride to me? There is no perfection like his bride. He is hers, all hers. He is mad, and has given himself to her. What did he mean? And then he went away, poor soul, to the river-side. Sing willow, willow, all the green willow. What is that?"

So suddenly she started, and pointed into vacancy, that an intense terror seized them.

"There! there! there! What is it? Who is it? Is it dead, or does it still move? Will no one tell me who it is? Oh, heaven! is it Godfrey or that other?"

All day the delirium increased. The doctor, when he saw her, sent away his carriage, and refused to leave her side. "She must have had some terrible shock," he said to Mrs Neville. And the poor woman wept tears of bitter grief and remorse. All day getting worse and worse, Audine's voice, that used to be so soft and sweet, grew so loud and wild that no one could have recognised the sound. Now she would implore Mrs Neville to help her—to save her from her fate; then call her brother till the house seemed to ring with his name. But one ever-present horror seemed to haunt her—Castaletti's face watching her; and sometimes, in her struggles to escape from it, it required all Mrs Neville's and Burns's united strength to keep her in bed.

So the long days came to an end

one after another, and brought no relief. All day Godfrey wandered about in aimless misery. He would sit down and endeavour to read, then spring up and pace the room, or sit with his face hidden, every sense sharpened to hear sounds from the sick-room. Then, for hours together, he would wait on the stairs, till the sound of that beloved voice, never ceasing, never changing in its unnatural tone, became more than he could bear; and he would dash away out of the house—anywhere—to escape. In the evening his mother would come down to him; but she was changed. She seemed as if she could hardly bear to meet his eye; and she would give her hopeless news without any softening words, and go back as quickly as she could. And the days passed on.

Then came a letter from Colonel Fitzjames; he was on his way—would be here in a few days. In anguish, the thought suggested itself to all those watchers, would he be in time?

The doctors spoke of a strangely depressed nervous system, aggravated by the violent blow on the head which she had received which had produced this terrible brain-fever.

At last—it was in the dead of night—her voice died suddenly away, and was succeeded by so awful and profound a stillness that they knew not how to bear it.

When morning dawned they said she was just alive, that was all: the heart still beat, the faint breath still dimmed the mirror, but all hope was over—the exhaustion seemed beyond remedies. Godfrey stood outside her door, listening to the softest movement within.

At last they set the door wide open for air, and he stole in. They were all standing motionless round her, watching the ivory-white of her cheek, the half-shut eyes, the half-closed lips. The doctor bent suddenly down, and put his hand on her heart.

Mrs Neville gave him one wild look, and he shook his head sorrowfully. Godfrey saw, and could bear no more; he turned and rushed down-stairs—down into the room in which he had last seen her, and he leant against the wall against which she had leant when he had held her hands and for one short second pressed her to his heart. His mother followed him, cold as ice, with burning colour on her cheeks.

"She is dead, Godfrey," she said, in a voice out of which all the tone had gone—"she is dead, and I have killed her."

Godfrey grasped her arm. "Speak, woman! what do you mean?"

"I deceived her and you. Oh, Godfrey, be merciful!"

"Then it is not true? She did not love me!"

"Godfrey!"

"It is not true! you have broken our hearts, and betrayed us both by a lie."

"Godfrey!"

But he threw her from him, and was gone—gone before she could hold him fast, and had left her alone in her bitter woe.

Meanwhile quick steps had mounted the stairs—steps that had not been there for many a day—and had gone straight to Audine's room.

"They told me I was too late," cried Colonel Fitzjames; his voice sounded strangely loud, and they all drew back, and allowed him to approach and kneel beside her.

"Oh, my God, I am not too late! Audine! my darling, my precious one, look up! Audine!"

Did that voice really bring her back from the grave? Were their prayers keeping her with them? A moment, a few seconds more, and the pure spirit would have returned to God who gave it. But no; from the shore of the dark river the angels brought her back, once more to take up the burden and heat of the day.

A little quiver of the eyelid, not more than the effect of the softest breath of air passing over the petals of a flower—they watched in breathless anxiety—then over her lips came a smile of ineffable sweetness; the angels were bidding her farewell, were winging their way home again and leaving her behind.

The doctor put brandy to her lips—thank God, she swallowed that!—then her head fell back and her eyes closed. In terror Colonel Fitzjames bent down.

"No, no," said the old doctor, unconsciously using Bible words, "she is not dead, but sleepeth."

The hush of the house was unbroken; no one moved but to give her what was needful—they hardly dared to breathe.

When Audine again opened her eyes, they rested on her brother with such a look of trust and peace that the tears fell fast from his own, and his whole soul went up to God in passionate thankfulness that he had spared to him the beloved sister, who was to him as dear as his own child would have been.

CHAPTER XIII.

Mrs Neville confessed all. She strove neither to conceal anything nor to shelter herself from blame, but told all—her reason for so passionate a wish that Audine should marry her son, and the fatal deceit

she had practised to bring it about. At first Colonel Fitzjames could not forgive it: his first words were bitter reproaches; but in the thankfulness of watching the daily change and improvement in his Audine, he

gradually began to resume his old manner with her, and she felt herself pardoned by him. But she could not forgive herself, and the bitter pain of that time was increased tenfold by Godfrey's disappearance. When he rushed out of that house believing Audine to be dead, he had never returned; and all she knew was that, by her wish, Girwood was wandering from place to place seeking him. She dared not think of what his state of mind might be.

Audine's recovery was very slow. Long after the fever left her she was very nervous, and would be constantly entreating her brother to assure her over and over again that Castaletti's death had nothing to do with her. She would wake up in the night in an agony of terror, and nothing would calm her but his presence; and it was many weeks before she grew strong enough to battle with this dread, and overcome it; and they feared that it would take years before Mrs Neville's fatal words would vanish from her mind.

When the early spring set in Audine was allowed to come downstairs. The first sight of Mrs Neville, shortly after her return to consciousness, had so dangerously excited her, that they were not allowed to meet again; and without the comfort of feeling that she could be of use, the time seemed preternaturally long to the poor woman.

A mild, warm spring set in; there were brilliant days, such as often come for a short time in March, when Audine first came down into the drawing-room. Mrs Neville did not venture to ask whether she might see her; and Colonel Fitzjames, having forgotten the fact of her exclusion, did not say anything about it; and as the hour drew near at which the little invalid was to appear,

she felt her heart beating very fast with anxiety and anticipation. She had rearranged the room completely,—it hardly looked the same: a large sofa, flanked by a screen, was drawn up to the window; a little table covered with books and snowdrops close to it; a pretty lace quilt,—all to look as bright and cheerful as possible.

She was still standing inspecting all her arrangements, when Burns came in to see if everything was ready. When she saw Mrs Neville she stopped and would have retreated with a very stiff curtsy; but Mrs Neville stopped her, involuntarily twisting her hands in her nervousness.

"Burns, do you think I might see Miss Fitzjames? Would it hurt her now?"

"I can't say, ma'am."

"But what do you think? I do so long to see her! but I would not do her harm for the world."

"No, ma'am, harm enough has been done already," said the nurse.

"Oh, do tell me! I dare not do it on my own responsibility"—and the tears rose to her eyes.

"I can't take it upon myself to say, ma'am," repeated Burns.

"And has she never asked for me? never mentioned my name?"

"She talked of you incessantly, enough for me to understand perfectly well what she meant, but never to ask for you."

"Burns, why are you so unfriendly to me? you are changed."

Burns was trembling with suppressed feeling. "I can't say, ma'am; things have changed, and them as causes things to change, should not wonder to find them so."

"But in nothing have I changed to you," said Mrs Neville, haughtily; but Burns's feelings would no longer be controlled.

"Men are not like women, ma'am, and I can see it's all dead and

buried like with the Colonel; but I can never forgive you — not if a thousand years passed over my head, and you asked pardon every day of the thousand. To take and deceive my young lady, and she a motherless child! I beg your pardon, ma'am; and if you are offended I cannot help it, for you brought it on yourself"—and without waiting for an answer Burns curtsied and left the room.

Mrs Neville's first feeling was intense indignation, but to her crushed spirit soon came the relief of tears: she was reaping the sad fruits of ill-doing. She would not attempt to see Audine after that, until one day that she received a message from the invalid herself, begging her to come to her.

As she was going, Colonel Fitzjames met her and asked her to speak to him in the library first. He looked nervous and hesitating, as if he hardly knew how to begin.

"What have you got to say to me, George?" she said. "If it is to warn me not to agitate Audine, I will tell you beforehand that I will be very careful."

"The fact is, Mrs Neville," he began, "that one fixed, strong idea has remained in Audine's mind, that she is—in fact, that her engagement to your son stands as it did."

Mrs Neville started; he went on: "It is a difficult thing to say, and I would not hurt your feelings if I could help it, but I cannot allow such an engagement. I was a fool to trust her out of my own sight. I do not mean to distress you," he said, seeing that she had covered her face with her hands, "but I must beg you to do all in your power to undo the mischief—to make her feel that she is absolutely free. Do not speak to her about it unless she begins. Now, shall we go?"

Mrs Neville followed him; her

heart was too full for speech. Just outside the door she paused to take breath. How would Audine receive her? What would she say and do?

In another moment she found herself kneeling by the sofa, warmly kissed, and struggling hard to suppress her tears.

Not till she was seated quietly opposite to her did Mrs Neville see how much Audine was changed; it was more than the loss of her long hair and the soft pink of her cheek could effect. Though she was as charming as ever, perhaps more so, her life had lost something out of it that would never come back,—she was no longer a child.

They passed a quiet still evening together, Colonel Fitzjames reading the 'Antiquary' aloud, Audine pretending to knit, but leaving the white wool idle in her lap. When the clock struck nine, Colonel Fitzjames went away to call Burns to help him to carry her up-stairs; he had scarcely left the room when Audine held out her thin little hand and said, "Where is Mr Neville, aunt Mary?"

Mrs Neville never had much presence of mind, and now she lost it altogether; she covered her face with her hands, saying piteously—

"Oh, Audine, I do not know!"

She was terrified out of her senses, for Audine fell back heavily and fainted away.

To call for help, to be hastily pushed aside out of the way, was the work of a moment, and she found herself alone.

Audine did not again leave her room for some days; she was incessantly asking about Godfrey, and they invented all sorts of answers. Her anxiety made her too acute for deception, and the doctor considered it a matter of grave importance that her mind should be set at rest, and still there was nothing to say.

Mrs Neville, no longer admitted to Audine's presence, became so

miserably, irritably anxious, that at last she could no longer bear it, and she made up her mind to go to London to Girwood, and wait there for tidings of her son.

All agitation and excitement were to be kept from Audine; the doctor warned Mrs Neville that this was of paramount importance, and it seemed to strike her with an additional pang, she had so longed to unburden herself to Audine, to entreat her pardon. She passed one whole morning in bitter tears, then she determined that she would go away in the night without any farewell. She told her plan to Colonel Fitzjames, and he thanked her with a warmth which it was sweet to

her to remember afterwards. So when all were asleep but her own servants and Colonel Fitzjames, Mrs Neville stole up to Audine's room for one last look.

She felt as if her heart was bursting as she looked on the sleeping girl, her little face so white and fragile, the slender hands clasped over her head, so thin and transparent that every blue vein was visible. Her chest heaved with sobs, she fell on her knees and prayed as she never had prayed before; and as Colonel Fitzjames led her away to her carriage, she groped with her hands, as if blind to all but the intensity of her own pain.

CHAPTER XIV.

The keen cold air blew on Mrs Neville's face as she drove up the Thames embankment; it was so cold and chilly that she drew her shawl tightly round her. The river stirred and shivered under the air, and as yet there was no busy life, no hurrying to and fro in the shadowless twilight. Gaunt and grim rose the great figure-heads in Girwood's Yard. A strange wonder passed through Mrs Neville's mind, whether, when the whole city slept, these great figures received the power of speech, and told each other tales of the days gone by.

She rang the bell, dismissing her cab, and the door was opened at once by the owner of the house. He seemed to show no surprise at seeing her, but said in a whisper, "I have brought him home; will you come to him at once?"

"Ah, thank God! and how —" she stopped, for Girwood shook his head sorrowfully and walked on before her. It was dark in the passages, and the candle he carried across the yard seemed a

strange contrast in its red garish light to the cold blue air.

On to the studio they went; then Girwood whispered, "I have had the ring removed; do not contradict a word he says, I beseech you."

He slid back the door and went in.

The studio was brilliantly illuminated, as it used to be, and all the vases were full of tulips and other spring flowers. In the midst of it, before the fatal statue, stood Godfrey. He was in deep mourning. When he saw his mother he smiled a strange pathetic smile, and began to speak in a voice as if he were speaking in a dream—

"When the world was young, Hera came down from heaven, divinely beautiful and good, and I wed her with a golden ring, two thousand years ago, mother—two thousand years ago. And while she remained upon earth, all was joy; wars ceased in all the lands, and sorrow vanished away."

Mrs Neville watched him in tearless agony.

"But when the ages rolled on, and daylight merged into evening, and the twilight of the world began, her spirit left me, and she is now a cold and lifeless stone. Look!"

"God help me!" cried the unhappy mother. He paid no heed to her words, but went on—

"I cannot tell how it was—whether it was a dream, a wild vision of the night—but the room was all full of faces, and a voice cried, 'She is dead.' I heard them call her name once, twice, thrice! 'Audine! Audine! Audine!' and then when I looked they had borne her away, and I was alone with that." He stretched out both hands to the statue. "And that lives not, breathes not, speaks not; it is a lifeless, soulless stone. But twilight grows into darkness, and the night of the world will soon begin."

The great dread of her life had come upon Mrs Neville, reason had forsaken her son.

She took rooms close to Girwood's Yard, and spent every day in that agonised watch for some sign of improvement, some gleam of hope in his condition.

They telegraphed these short lines to Colonel Fitzjames: "Found

Godfrey here; shall remain with him."

The relief was very great. He hastened at once to Audine with the news, and it was wonderful to see what rapid progress she made towards recovery when the anxiety was over.

The doctor now strongly urged that they should go abroad. To Audine the idea of a journey in Italy was perfectly delightful. She had never travelled, and her anticipation of all the wonders she was to see made her brother fear that she might be disappointed; but this new turn to her thoughts was a great boon, and made her almost forget her troubles.

Colonel Fitzjames sent for books for her: Mrs Jameson's 'Lives of the Saints,' Murrays, and Baedekers. All were, however, thrown aside when she had got possession of 'The History of Christian Art,' which she studied with extreme delight.

There was no reason to put off their start. They proposed to spend the rest of April and all May in Florence; and when it grew too hot to remain in Italy, to go up to the Lakes and finish by a tour in Switzerland.

CHAPTER XV.

The brilliant sun shone down on the streets of Florence, a cloudless sky of exquisite blue, and the air full of the ineffable sweetness of an Italian May.

Audine had enjoyed herself beyond her greatest expectations—scenery, galleries, all was one continued source of delight. Her health had improved, her mind developed, and Colonel Fitzjames had every reason to be proud of the admiration his lovely young sister excited wherever she appeared.

It was growing too hot for Flor-

ence, they must turn their steps to the cooler and more bracing Switzerland; but yet they lingered on—these hot days were so delicious. They had finished their self-appointed task of sight-seeing, and now had only to enjoy themselves; going again to each favourite resort when and as often as they pleased.

Two days before the day appointed for their departure, Colonel Fitzjames received a long letter from Mrs Neville. Its black seal made him at once hide it from his sister's

sight ; but after reading it through, he determined to conceal nothing from her, but tell her as gently and considerately as he could that poor Godfrey's troubled spirit was at rest.

Audine was seated by the window looking on the sunlit Arno ; her eyes were dim with crying as her brother read aloud her dear old friend's letter :—

"MY DEAR GEORGE, — Perhaps you may have seen in the papers my loss—the death of my Godfrey. Perhaps Audine knows, or it may be that you have thought it best to conceal it from her : some day you may be able to show her this. If I write incoherently you must not blame me. He is lying in the studio, and I have just been in there to say my last good-bye, and at this very moment they are hiding him away from my sight. After to-morrow is over I shall be better. He looks so beautiful in death : calm and still as marble, and all the wild pain gone from his face, the deep lines from his brow. You heard, perhaps, of the awful fever that came on, of the delirium of indescribable horror. Three days before his death the fever left him, and when the sanity came back to his eyes, the doctor said, 'He must die.' My heart would have broken then, but it has become like a stone in my breast, and I seem to have outlived its life.

"On Friday morning the delirium ceased, and all day long he lay holding my hand, now and then saying soft loving words, always watching every movement that I made.

"All Saturday he lay half asleep, and his pulse growing very faint. On Sunday a clergyman came in, and Godfrey seemed to listen to his

words, but he did not speak ; perhaps he no longer had the power.

"Girwood brought in a great nosegay of flowers, and about eleven o'clock the church-bells began to ring, far and near, and all down the river-side, and Godfrey listening smiled. They had not ceased when the priest knelt down and read that prayer, the last : when the last words were said, his lips were moving. I heard three times 'Audine ! Audine ! Audine !' and all was over.

"They have laid him in his coffin, they are hiding him from my sight ; he was all that God had left to me on earth. Oh, George, do you think He will let me die soon ?

"Kiss Audine for me. You will not keep me from her when you both come home ? Oh, what shall I do ? what shall I do ?—Your affectionate MARY NEVILLE."

Colonel Fitzjames laid down the letter, for Audine was sobbing in his arms.

"What shall we do, Audine ?"

"George, she must come to us ! she must never leave us now !"

And so it was. The poor mother, broken in health and spirits, rejoined her friends to be comforted by their loving care.

Girwood, no longer young, took a morbid horror of the stone-yard near the river, and he sold the business. Mrs Neville, who could never endure the sight of Godfrey's ill-fated statue, entreated him to find a purchaser for it for his own benefit, which, after some years of hesitation, he consented to do. The new owner carried the statue far away to distant lands ; but wherever she was seen rose up a tribute of admiration for the genius that had created anything so beautiful as Godfrey's White Queen.

THE PRIZE FRENCH NOVEL.

As we had occasion to observe repeatedly in a recent article on French novelists, the honours awarded by the Council of the Academy are by no means a guarantee for moral excellence. Literary genius is permitted an ample licence which it uses freely, and often abuses. We have pictures of life which may be striking, and are possibly veracious, but over which discretion and delicacy would be inclined to throw a veil; while clever authors exhaust their ingenuity in refining on the eccentricities of illicit passion. In short, it seems to be the doctrine of the Academy that breadth and boldness of treatment are the qualities most to be admired; and that fiction should be written for adults of experience who have graduated in the vices and follies of the age. It is something of an event, then, and no ordinary distinction besides, when a novel, in the opinion of those eminent experts, is considered good enough to gain the Monthyon prize of virtue, which takes the form of a *douceur* of 25,000 francs. That, as the French say, is a *joli denier* to fall to an author incidentally in these days of keen competition; and it ought to insure his book, besides, an extensive circulation, which must raise a reputation that already stands high. Appearing under such a distinguished *imprimatur*, the story should be clever enough to please anybody; and for once, a novel of talent is recommended for popularity in families. That is the success which M. Hector Malot has just obtained with his 'Sans Famille;' and if we are in any degree disappointed in the book, it is merely because our expectations had been raised,

under the circumstances, unnaturally high. If it does not strike us as absolutely a masterpiece, it is undoubtedly an extremely fascinating story, written with unflagging force and spirit, and as full of genuine pathos as of graceful and delicate descriptions. If there is an agreeable absence of coarse or licentious sensation, there is an abundance of lively and moving incident. And the interest—which, with some exceptions we shall call attention to, is invariably innocent and natural—is sustained with ingenious simplicity from the first chapter to the last.

'Sans Famille' is a book for children as well as for grown-up people. As the name implies, it relates the adventures of a foundling who, after passing unharmed and uncontaminated through a series of trials and vicissitudes, is reclaimed at last by his wealthy family. The notion of such a juvenile Gil Blas is by no means a new one. Eugene Sue for one had written the 'History of a Foundling,' in his own eminently characteristic style; but nothing can be more striking in every respect than the contrast between the book of the sensation-loving advocate of Socialism and this of M. Malot. Sue's Martin was one of those ideal characters who reproduce, and in rare luxuriance, in the hotbeds of crime and dissipation the simple virtues of the Golden Age. Like M. Malot's brave and honest little hero, he went unscathed through the temptations that beset his path; but then, for the purpose of his glorification, or for the satisfaction of the readers of the *feuilleton*, these temptations were painted with a

minuteness that left nothing to desire. 'Martin,' in fact, was an unwholesome book, with an admirable moral; while 'Sans Famille' is written throughout in a tone of scrupulous purity. Rémi, the foundling, is thrown among hard people and bad people; he is forced into the company of thieves, and has to extricate himself as he can from the snares that they lay for him. Our common-sense tells us that he must have been familiar with sights and scenes that were far from edifying, and doubtless he had to listen to a deal of bad language. It was a grand opportunity for a realistic writer who was ambitious of depicting coarseness and crime with all the force of effective contrast. But M. Malot shows none of that cynical realism which seeks its situations and sensations in doing violence to our feelings and decency; and he leaves all that is gross and objectionable to be filled in *à discretion* by the practised imagination.

What is even more strange to the readers of contemporary fiction, there is an almost entire absence of the love-making which is the staple of the ordinary novel; although there is a very fair amount of marrying and giving in marriage compressed into the chapter which may pass for the epilogue. Not that the story is by any means destitute of sentiment, amorous as well as amical. Young Rémi not only slips into firm friendships with the animals and children who at one time or another form the family circles of the small adventurer; but in the nascent chivalry of his affectionate nature, he has a precocious attachment for a little dumb girl, who subsequently becomes the partner of his prosperity. M. Malot, indeed, draws those children and animals with a sympathy and tenderness which are inexpressibly engaging, as he strikes the key to

the tone of his story on the title-page, in the dedication of the contents to his own little daughter. And by way of showing the spirit which inspired the composition of his work, we can hardly do better than quote that dedication:—

"While writing this book I have been constantly thinking of you, my child, and your name at each moment has been coming to my lips. Will Lucie feel that? Will Lucie be interested in that? Always Lucie. Your name so often pronounced should be inscribed at the head of these pages. I know not what fortune may be reserved for them; but be it what it will, they will have given me the pleasure which is well worth every success,—the satisfaction of thinking you may read them—the joy of offering them to you."

The success may have exceeded the writer's expectations, though his literary experience must have told him that he had gone some way towards deserving it. His sketches of character, especially those taken from humble life, impress one forcibly as being as real as they are vigorous. As we have said already, he chiefly excels in his children, and those creations of his own sympathetic fancy have clearly become living realities for him. Their sufferings and misfortunes serve to endear them to him, and as you distinguish the working of their better nature which triumphs over the drawbacks of their miserable upbringing, you grow attached to them in spite of their rags and dirt. The touches in which he describes their rare moments of enjoyment, and the pleasures which, to those who have been nursed in affluence, seem almost a melancholy satire on the word, might make one inclined to imagine that in his own early years he had gone through similar experiences to those of his Rémi. It may be said, indeed, that he looks

too habitually on the bright side of human nature—and perhaps the criticism would be a fair one. The life he has been narrating, and the necessities of his plot, make him introduce a fair sprinkling of villains; but with the single exception of a truculent master of organ-boys, these blacker sketches of his are rather superficial and theatrical. He has very evidently drawn them *contre casur*, thinking probably that his Lucie would be frightened or disgusted at them. But in landscape-painting he is always at home, and in his *itinéraire* through the greater part of the departments in France, he presents us with landscapes in endless variety. It is characteristic of the subdued tone of his style that there are few of those passages that will bear quotation apart from the context in which they are naturally introduced. They are the very reverse of fine writing; he is chary of vaguely eloquent epithets, and never indulges in high-flown flights of word-painting. But on the other hand, in a few well-considered lines, or even with a casual touch or two, he can convey a most vivid impression of the features of a district, reviving the fading recollections of his reader.

We make the acquaintance of the little Rémi in a village in one of the most poverty-stricken districts in the centre of France. He has been adopted and brought up by a "*brave femme*," an expression which has hardly its counterpart in English. The Mère Barberin and her husband are typical French peasants. The couple are on good terms enough, but they have been in the way of living much apart, owing to the necessity of getting a livelihood. Barberin is a mason or bricklayer. Although his *pied-à-terre* is in the country, unfortunately he is not a peasant pro-

prietor; and he has been residing in Paris, where work abounds. As for his wife, she stays at home and does her best to keep a cottage roof over her head, sending out their solitary cow to feed by the roadsides under the care of Rémi. While the couple were living together in the great capital, Barberin had picked up the child one evening, in one of the avenues of the Champs Elysées quarter. An impulse of humanity might have had something to say to his bringing it home, but the speculation of making a good stroke of business had influenced him more immediately. The dress of the abandoned baby showed that the parents must be wealthy, and it might be hoped that it would be reclaimed sooner or later. Mère Barberin's heart is touched at once by its helplessness—the more so, that she has lost an infant of her own. She takes the child to her motherly arms, and pets and spoils it as it grows up. Rémi, whose nature is one that expands with affection, regards the loving woman as his mother. When they had shifted their home to the country, and Barberin had returned to Paris, neither the woman nor her nursing appears to miss him much. The wife has news of her husband from time to time by travelling comrades, who seek a night's hospitality. Though he sends messages more often than money, she is content; for she continues to support herself and her little charge *tant bien que mal*. Unfortunately times of trouble are in store for them. Barberin has an accident, and is shelved in the hospital; and he sends orders to sell the cow and remit him the price. He is *père de famille* and the poor woman's master, and there is no disputing the peremptory behest. The sale of the poor "*Rousette*" and the leave-

taking are the first of a long series of touching scenes which are described in simple and graphic language.

"We lived so well by our cow, Mère Barberin and I, that to this moment I had hardly ever tasted meat. But it was not only our wet-nurse that she was, she was our comrade too, and our friend: for you are not to fancy that the cow is a stupid beast; on the contrary, it is an animal full of intelligence and of moral virtues, so much the more developed as they have been cultivated by education. We petted our cow, we talked to her, she understood us; and as for her, with her big, round, gentle eyes, she knew very well how to make us understand what she wanted or how she felt. In short, she loved us, and we loved her, which is saying everything."

Rousette felt the separation as much as her owners. Her astonished resistance is only overcome when it is explained to her that there is positively no help for it; and when she has been led from the embraces of her sorrowing family, her lamentations are heard dying away in the distance. The loss of the cow is but the beginning of sorrows, and the prelude to a far more trying separation. Barberin comes back a sullen cripple to a cottage where there is no more milk and butter. Naturally his first idea is to retrench, and he is ready, besides, *faire flèche de tout bois*, as the proverb has it. There is no prospect, apparently, of Rémi being reclaimed; he is only a burden in the meantime, and the best thing is to get rid of him. The tension of feeling in the Barberin household, in these circumstances, is described with wonderful fidelity to nature. We have Barberin himself behaving the more roughly, that he is ashamed in his heart of what he is doing. Seemingly he reassures himself with a free French rendering of our English "Needs must," &c.; and

assumes a more despotic and repulsive manner than is customary with him. As for his hard-working wife, she never dreams of disputing the will of her tyrant, whom, after all, she loves in a fashion; though she does not scruple to deceive him and play the hypocrite, with the idea of making things smoother for Rémi. And both she and the little boy are waiting in grief and apprehension the impending separation, which they feel to be inevitable.

We remarked already on the instinctive sympathy with which M. Malot enters into the probable feelings of his little hero, and in this supreme moment of Rémi's young life we have an admirable example of it. Barberin has led him away from his mother by adoption, to be disposed of either at the Hospice of the commune or elsewhere. His ingenuity exhausts itself in disagreeable suggestions; his speculations lose themselves in horrible uncertainty, and he fears he will never come back to his home. Yet when Barberin, taking him by the ear, pushes him into the village *café*, and when he hears the door shut to behind him, he says—

"I felt myself comforted; the *café* did not seem to me a dangerous place; and besides, on the other hand, it was the *café*, and I had always had a longing to pass its door. The *café*! the *café* of the *auberge* Notre Dame! what sort of place could that possibly be! How often I had asked myself the question!"

Dangerous for him or no, it was in the *café* his fate was to be decided by a chance *rencontre* due to accident or Providence. After considerable haggling, he is bought cheap from his foster-father by a picturesque-looking old gentleman in ragged sheepskin and faded velvet. Barberin asks few questions of the purchaser, but Rémi might have been very much worse

off. Old Vitalis is an Italian naturalised as a Frenchman, and master of a troop of travelling comedians. The company for which Rémi has been recruited, consists of a poodle, a spaniel, a third dog, and a monkey—the latter a fellow of infinite jest. How Rémi falls gradually into relations of affectionate intimacy with the members of his new family is charmingly described. Surely M. Malot must have modelled his animals from the life, for he gives each of them its own very distinct individuality, with traits of character which never belie themselves. Signor Vitalis presents them to his new acquisition, in language which *sent le grand seigneur* through the sheepskins, and we see at once that there is a mystery in the life of this grand-mannered *impresario*. "The one I call Capi," continued Vitalis, "otherwise called Capitano in Italian, is the chief of the dogs; it is he who, as the most intelligent, transmits my orders to the others. This young dandy with the black hair is the Signor Zerbino, which means the gallant, a name which he merits in every respect. As for that young lady with the modest air, she is the Signora Dolce, a charming Englishwoman, who has not stolen her name of the gentle one." All the dogs are excellent company, though Zerbino and Dolce have their defects. The former is *gourmand*, and given to petty larceny under temptation; and the temptations come by no means unfrequently, since, notwithstanding the talents of the troop, they are from time to time reduced to short commons; while the beautiful Dolce is coquettish and volatile. But Capi is a dog of no ordinary character, and before the close of his well-spent life—which M. Malot, by the way, prolongs rather improbably—we get to feel the warmest respect and regard for him.

Though he has lived on the roads, his morals are beyond reproach; so far as his lights go, his conduct is unimpeachable; his intelligence, as his master boasted, is extraordinary; and he has not only a heart of gold, but excellent taste and discretion. Poor little Rémi is naturally very sad, as he is led away over the range of hills that rises behind the cottage where he has been brought up. With streaming eyes he has taken his last wistful look at the well-known dung-heap, and the solitary fowl, and the crooked pear-tree on whose branch he used to swing. He had screamed an adieu or appeal of "*Maman! maman!*" from a distance, to the Mère Barberin, who had appeared on the scene, and seemed to be searching for him. He had been somewhat consoled by his new master's promise of hob-nailed shoes and a pair of velvet breeches when they should reach the nearest town. But at night, when they had to sleep on some bundles of fern in an empty barn, after slightly breaking their fast on a crust, his spirits gave way as he thought of his warm bed and the soup the Mère Barberin used to make for supper. As he lay shivering and hungry in his solitary wretchedness the future terrified him—

"Would it be always the same thing, day after day? to trudge forward under the rain without resting, to sleep in some barn, to shake with cold, to have nothing for supper but a bit of dry bread, nobody to pity me, nobody to love, no Mère Barberin?"

"As I was thinking sadly, with a swelling heart and my eyes brimful of tears, I felt a warm breath pass over my face. I stretched out my hand, and it met the curly coat of Capi. He had drawn near me softly, slipping stealthily over the fern, and he was smelling at me; he snuffed gently; his breath ran over my face and in my hair. What did he want? He stretch-

ed himself down in the fern close by me, and began delicately to lick my hands. Quite overcome by the caress, I half raised myself, and kissed him on his cold nose. He gave a little stifled cry, then quickly he put his paw in my hand, and lay still. Then I forgot my weariness and my troubles; my choking throat was relieved; I breathed again; I was no longer alone; I had a friend."

The respectable Capi was Rémi's first friend, as Mattia, a little Savoyard outcast, was his second. The friendship with Capi never belied itself through the many vicissitudes of their checkered fortunes, though on several occasions, like the worthy Mère Barberin, Vitalis's trusted deputy tried to reconcile his feelings with his duty. He had mounted guard on Rémi at a sign from Vitalis, while the boy was still so near the cottage that a sudden impulse and a light pair of legs might have carried him down the hill to it in a rush. Yet in the darkness his feelings of sympathy became irresistible, and he took the opportunity of expressing the compassion he had stifled. So in another charming little scene, on another occasion, Rémi and the four-footed comedians had temporarily lost their master, who, having infringed the police regulations, had been locked away in prison for a month or two. Poor Rémi finds Zerbino and Dolce very difficult to manage, as he has to keep them in good humour on short commons. Zerbino has bolted with a piece of meat from a butcher's; and being fully aware of the enormity of his offence, shows no signs of reappearing. Rémi, in despair, turns to his friend and confidant, and despatches him in quest of the culprit.

"I called Capi.

"Go and bring me Zerbino.' And he started straightway to accomplish

the mission I had charged him with. It seemed to me, however, that he accepted his rôle with less zeal than was usual with him, and in the glance that he cast at me before going off, I fancied I saw that he would rather have been Zerbino's advocate than my gendarme. . . . An hour passed without my seeing either one or the other come back, and I had begun to feel uneasy when Capi reappeared alone with his head hanging down. 'Where is Zerbino?' Capi crouched in an attitude of alarm, and then on looking at him, I remarked that one of his ears was bleeding. I had no need of explanation for understanding what had happened. Zerbino had revolted against the gendarmerie—he had offered resistance; and Capi, who perhaps only obeyed with regret an order which he deemed exceedingly harsh, had willingly let himself have the worst of it."

Rémi's lot as a vagabond mountebank was a rough one. But M. Malot takes care to avoid putting an excessive strain upon our feelings. As Rémi's nature shows signs of his gentle blood and the hereditary transmission of noble qualities, so we are given to understand very soon that there is a brighter future in store for him. Besides, the boy is seldom actually maltreated, and when he is suffering from cold, hunger, or fatigue, we feel that he is going through an education which is salutary though severe. With his sunny sanguine disposition, he quickly begins to learn that happiness may be in a great measure independent of external circumstances; and he smooths the ways of life by the practice of a cheerful resignation. Many writers would have been inclined to work upon our feelings, and heighten the effects of impending contrasts by making the master he is sold to a brutal tyrant, or, at all events, careless and capricious. Old Vitalis is nothing of the kind; but, unfortunately, circumstances

have made him a misanthrope, and he is austere enough to be an uncongenial companion for a sensitive and warm-hearted child. At the same time he is no bad school-master for a foundling with the world before him,—and not an unfriendly one. He never gives way to passion; he is always just; he has studied human nature closely, and he reads the boy like a book. Characteristically he begins by making some apology for Barberin; for he sees that Rémi's faith in humanity has been rudely shocked. "He is not, perhaps, so hard as you imagine. He has not the means of living; he is crippled; he cannot work any more, and he calculates that he cannot let himself die of hunger for the sake of supporting you. Understand, once for all, my boy, that life is too often a battle, in which you cannot do just what you please." But Rémi is not to pass his life in comparative freedom from care and responsibility under the wing of Vitalis, who, after all, finds him in some sort of food, and stands between him and the world. Even before the successive catastrophes which deprive Vitalis of the means of livelihood, and then of life itself, Rémi is cast for a time on his own resources, and has some opportunity of learning to act independently. He is a child who has been growing prematurely into a man; he has a temperament that, happily for him, is at once thoughtful and *insouciant*. Vitalis is under lock and key, and the boy is turned with the *troupe* out of the *auberge* where they had been staying. He has but a very few *sous* in his purse, and there is nothing for it but to support himself and his dependants by falling back on their performances without their chief. The monkey, who, thanks to his size, has the smallest appetite of the party, is the most cheerful and the

least sympathetic. Rémi, who has got into the habit of prattling to the dogs and to himself, gathers his little company round him, and makes them a solemn address in due form.

"You wish us to give entertainments: assuredly it is good advice; but shall we make any money? All depends on that. If we don't succeed, I warn you that we have but three *sous* for our whole fortune. So we must take in a hole or two in our belts. That being the case, I venture to hope that you will understand the full gravity of the circumstances, and that, instead of playing me foolish tricks, you will place your intelligence at the service of the company. I ask for obedience, sobriety, and courage. Let us close our files and count upon me as I count on you."

The dogs, he says, understood his meaning if they did not enter into all the refinements of his eloquence. But as for M. Joli-Cœur, the monkey, it was impossible to keep his attention fixed on any subject. He began by listening with the most lively interest; but the next moment he had broken away, and was swinging himself in the branches of the trees overhead. "Had Capi offered me such an insult, I should certainly have felt wounded, but nothing surprised me in Joli-Cœur: he was only an addlepatte, a featherbrain; and then, after all, it was very natural that he should like to amuse himself a little." Thanks to the indifference of the villagers, and the officious interference of the *gardes champêtres*, the miserable little company would certainly have starved. They are saved in their extremity by a happy accident, in which Rémi for a moment touches the port in which he is to rest from his wanderings at the end of his story. They are picked up on a floating yacht-barge, to play for the entertainment of a crippled English boy, whose mother,

following the prescription of the doctors, is taking him for a cruise on the rivers and canals. A word on Rémi's part might have cut short his troubles. We and the English lady know what he does not,—that she had been robbed of a baby in Paris some years before; and her maternal heart feels a strange affection for the gentlemanly young vagabond who has been living on her charity. But Rémi, negatively disingenuous for once, suppresses the fact of his being a foundling in telling his story. He is afraid of being ignominiously sent away as no fit companion for Arthur Milligan. So when Vitalis, on his release from prison, declines, for reasons which he afterwards repents, to hand the boy over to Mrs Milligan, Rémi must leave the floating Paradise to resume his wanderings on the inhospitable roads.

The incidents in which Vitalis recognises the punishment of his egotism come in as picturesque illustrations of the fate of solitary existences in a world which is busy with its own concerns. We have them lost in a snowstorm in a forest in the French midlands, and houseless in a wild winter night in Paris; and the city is as cruelly indifferent as the country. More so, indeed; for in the forest they at least find shelter in a woodcutter's hut, while in Paris the old man dies of exposure. But that night in the woodlands has cost them dear. There is a veil drawn over the fate of Dolce and Zerbino, for, having strayed away into the darkness, they are supposed to be snapped up by the wolves who are howling around the hovel. But the deathbed of poor M. Joli-Cœur is very pathetic, for he pays with his life for that volatile temperament of his. Instead of curling himself up warm under his master's sheepskin, he has chosen to run out into the snowstorm, and

caught inflammation of the lungs. He is recovered, indeed, and taken to the nearest village, and put to bed in a comfortable room in the *auberge*, where all that medical skill can do is done for him. Vitalis, by diplomacy and delicate flattery, has even persuaded the doctor of the place to attend to him. As he remarked in his most insinuating manner—

“No doubt the patient was only a monkey, but a monkey of extraordinary genius; and a comrade besides, and a friend for us. How could we intrust so remarkable a comedian to the care of an ordinary veterinary surgeon! Everybody knows that those village farriers are no better than asses; while everybody knows, too, that the physicians in their different degrees are all men of science,—so much so, that you are certain in the smallest village of finding skill and generosity when you ring at the doctor's door. Finally, though the monkey is only a beast, yet, according to the naturalists, he so closely resembles a man that the diseases of the one are the same as those of the other. Is it not interesting, from this point of view of art, to study the points in which those maladies resemble each other and those in which they differ?”

The doctor does his best, but the disease has gone too far. Joli-Cœur's character has been changed and softened by illness. He clings to his friends, and, like a spoiled child, will let neither of them out of his sight. He even craves for sympathy from Capi whom he used to take a pleasure in tormenting. But his *gourmandise* remains by him to the last, nor does the near approach of death make him forget the cunning which finally precipitates his end. Rémi had spent his only *sous* in buying barley-sugar for the poor little invalid, and as Joli-Cœur remarked that he got a piece when he coughed, he took to coughing perpetually.

“When I found out the trick, you

may be sure I put away the barley-sugar ; but he would not be discouraged. He began by imploring me with suppliant eyes ; but when he saw that his prayers were useless, he raised himself to a sitting posture, and bending double, with one hand pressed upon his stomach, he coughed with all his strength ; his face grew flushed, the veins of his forehead distended themselves, the tears streamed from his eyes, and he perished by suffocation—no longer playing a comedy, but for good and all."

The second part of Rémi's public life finds him his own master. Vitalis is dead and buried ; and Capi has transferred his allegiance. It is true that Vitalis had died because he could not find friends and a shelter at a moment's notice ; but the whole moral of M. Malot's book is that there is a great deal of disinterested charity in the world, and especially among the poor who are most in need of it. Even Barberin found an apologist in Vitalis ; and Rémi is always stumbling on somebody who lends him a helping hand ; though either some accident or his roving instincts make him keep continually moving on. When he loses his protector, he is received for a time into the family of a weak but worthy market-gardener, where he makes the acquaintance of his future wife. There is some novelty in the idea of making the chance acquaintance of two children develop into a serious and life-long attachment, and naturally little Lies does not figure very conspicuously in the story. She is separated almost immediately from her boy-lover, though the remembrance of her serves as a guiding star to keep him in the path of honesty and virtue, which, however, he has never shown an inclination to quit. But if he is somewhat too young for sentiment and a passion, he is sorely in need of companionship and friendship, and he is richly

rewarded, as it turns out, for a benevolent impulse. Rémi had paid a flying visit to the den of the *Ogre Garofali*, who traded on the wretchedness of small Savoyard organ-grinders, and there he had made the acquaintance of one of the victims ; and by a hazard he renews his friendship with Mattia as he is on the point of resuming his wanderings.

There is something very touching in the *rencontre* of the outcasts. Rémi's lot had been by no means an enviable one, but in comparison with Mattia, he had been living on velvet. Not only had Mattia never known kindness since a speculative uncle carried him off from his mother, but he had been half starved and brutally ill-treated. What makes his fate more poignant is, that he had his recollections like Rémi—recollections of a real mother and of a little sister who had loved him in the cottage in Savoy. Now cast out into the streets of Paris with his fiddle, he has lost heart, and resigned himself to dying. Rémi, who has seen the world, and is comparatively rich in the possession of a few loose francs, takes compassion on his helplessness. He chivalrously resolves to charge himself with Mattia and his fortunes ; and there is a delightfully natural touch of flattered vanity in the motives that bring him to his benevolent decision. He has the pleasure, for the first time, of playing the protector, and Mattia looks up to him with *naïf* respect.

"I can work," says Mattia, enforcing his appeal. "To begin with, I play the fiddle ; then I can disjoint myself. I dance on the rope, I jump through the hoops, I sing ; I shall be your servant, I shall obey you. I don't ask money, only food. If I behave badly, you shall beat me—that is agreed upon ; all I ask is, that you don't hit me on the head—that

must be agreed on too—for my head is too sensitive since Garofali thumped me on it so constantly."

A more industrious, long-headed, and intelligent pair of little fellows never took to travelling the provinces. Mattia with his engaging qualities, and a vast capacity for affection now that he has found a friend to lavish it on, has all the subtlety of the Italian in embryo. This juvenile Machiavelli, under his airs of childish simplicity, takes the measure of the shrewd French peasant to an inch, and even manages to hold his own with the stern minions of the police. Rémi has had a magnificent idea, and Mattia has thrown himself into it heart and soul. They are to sing and play their way to the cottage of the Mère Barberin, having previously arranged a joyful surprise for her. When her husband met with his accident, she had had, as already mentioned, to sell the cow she lived by, and now they hope to replace Rousette with another. So while they gather in *sous* and "white pieces" at their *al fresco* concerts, they make it their pleasure to live as frugally as they may, that they may save all they can towards the purchase-money. We almost forget that they are mere children, till Rémi very seasonably reminds us of it. They had bought their cow at last, to their great joy and pride, with the assistance of a kindly farrier, and were conducting her towards her destination by easy stages. They had halted for their morning meal, and to let her feed by the side of the road.

"Naturally we had done eating long before the cow; then after admiring her quite long enough, not knowing what to do, we set to playing at ball, Mattia and me—for you must not fancy that we were two *petits bonshommes*, grave and serious, thinking of nothing but getting money. If we led

a life unlike that of children of our age, we had all the same the tastes and the ideas of our childhood,—that is to say, we liked to play at children's games, nor did we ever let a day go by without a game at ball or leap-frog. All at once, for no particular reason very often, Mattia would say to me, 'Shall we have a game?' Then in a turn of the hand we laid aside our bags and our instruments, and began to play on the road; and more than once, had I not had my watch to remind me of the hour, we should have gone on playing till nightfall. But it warned me that I was chief of the *troupe*,—that we must work and get money for our living; and then I would pass the band of my harp over my aching shoulders, and *en avant*."

It is a charming episode where the cow is introduced on the sly into Mère Barberin's empty cowshed; and the pleasant practical joke is crowned with complete success, while it is hard to say whether the old lady or the children are the most delighted. Then there is a most sensational incident which nearly ends in a disastrous tragedy, when Rémi is shut up for many days in a coal-mine, owing to an explosion of gas and an influx of water. Casually M. Malot gives a vivid picture of the free-thinking, the serious piety, and the superstition that are to be found in different members of the French labouring classes. The little knot of imprisoned miners in the imminent approach of death, express their innermost feelings as if they had met in the confessional; and in particular there is a fierce outburst of doctrinal controversy between a bigoted Catholic and a devout Protestant of the Cevennes. But Rémi's wanderings in France are drawing to a conclusion. His visit of gratitude to his foster-mother, and the self-denial he showed in the purchase of the cow, have brought him a reward as usual. He has got a clue to the existence of relations who have been looking for him, and is

only too eager to be received into a family of his own. He has all along had a craving for affection, and it becomes absorbing and overpowering, now he has a hope of its being gratified. He never doubts for a moment that his friends must be rich, for Mère Barberin has dwelt upon the costliness of his baby-linen, and the idea fills him with delight,—not so much for himself as for those who have been good to him; and flattering himself with the great things he means to do for them, he builds all kinds of castles in the air. Nor have his expectations deceived him, as it proves in the end, though there are many slips between the cup and the lip. An advertisement that takes him over to England in search of his mother lands him in a *guet-apens*. Though his English adventures are exciting enough in all conscience, we must say that they compare unfavourably with his French experiences. M. Malot knows England very creditably for a Frenchman, but naturally he shows none of that intimate familiarity with it which gives their air of intense *vraisemblance* to his French pictures. Moreover, in bringing his slight plot to a hasty climax, he does considerable violence to probabilities. In consequence of the machinations of the malignant uncle who has been the author of all his misery, and has stood between him and his inheritance, Rémi is handed over to a household of thieves, who are imposed upon him as the family he has been in search of. The redeeming feature in that part of his story is the consistently conscientious way in which he strives to get up filial and fraternal devotion for the father and brothers from whom he instinctively revolts. Incorruptibly honest, he is arrested on a false charge, to be rescued by Mattia under circumstances which say little

for the vigilance and energy of our police. Safe again on the French side of the Channel, he gives himself up to the chase of Mrs Milligan, who, as he suspects, has reasons to be interested in him independently of their former acquaintance; and the mother and child, after brief but satisfactory explanations, fall into each other's arms. Rémi proves to be a rich English landowner, which accounts for the trouble taken to make away with him, and the difficulties interposed in the way of his recovery. How he marries Lise, who has been cured of her dumbness and educated by the benevolent care of Mrs Milligan; how his younger brother Arthur, who is delighted at being disinherited, makes the acquaintance of Mattia's sister and marries her; how Mattia himself, developing his extraordinary genius, becomes the most brilliant violinist of the age,—all these things are rather hurriedly narrated in the concluding chapter. The grateful and generous Rémi, unchanged by prosperity, unites all the humble friends of his adversity in a great family *fête* under the ancestral roof of the Milligans at Milligan Park. Even Capi in his honoured old age has survived to make one of the circle, and takes round the hat among "the honourable company," as in the old strolling days, on a quest that is to lay the foundations of a charity; while Mère Barberin, who has been persuaded to emigrate, brings down the baby who is her special care. We should willingly have had the conclusion simplified, so that the ending of the story might have been more in harmony with its course. But to French readers the blemishes we detect in the English scenes will be less conspicuous; and we may say that on the whole this innocent novel fully deserves the honour that has been done it.

RUFUS HICKMAN OF ST BOTOLPH'S.

I.

ON a Saturday evening in the beginning of October 1878, I was driving, or rather was being driven, along the road between Newmarket and Ely, intending to catch a train for the north at Ely. The past week had been a busy one—three days shooting and two days on Newmarket heath. It was the week of the second October meeting. On the Saturday in question I had shot until the last minute in a very high wind, and I felt pleasantly tired and drowsy. The country through which I was passing had once been familiar to me, alas! many years before, when I was at Cambridge; and there were few parts of it over which I had not ridden or shot. Lying as it does on the borders of Fenland, it cannot be called exactly pretty; yet it has distinctive features which, aided as they were that night by pleasant recollections, to my eye redeemed its plainness. The long stretches of training ground on the Lime-kilns and Warren hill on the one side, and the monster form of Ely Cathedral rising out of the fens on the other, relieved the pervading sense of flatness; while the well-bushed fields, dotted with many a covey, were pleasantly suggestive of good sport. I always admired the effect of wind-mills in a landscape, and there are many there; and as I drove along, a frosty sun setting behind them added to their picturesque effect.

I was engaged in thinking over my old college days when we reached this sleepy little town called Soham (population 5000 last census), half-way between Ely and Newmarket. I may observe parenthetically that, for full inquiry, I have failed to

discover any reason why 5000 persons should reside in Soham; but that is their affair. On this occasion the inhabitants were lounging about the main street, gossiping in groups, or making purchases for Sunday. The shops were lighted, and I was admiring the combined effect of the lights of the town and the frosty sunset, when I was driven abruptly into the courtyard of an inn in the High Street. My driver said that the horse required water; but the truth was, that five days' continuous racing had awakened in the man a deathless thirst which required frequent slaking. He accordingly beckoned to an ostler, and darted into the taproom, leaving me in the dogcart, too lazy to dismount.

Gradually half-a-dozen of the townspeople gathered round the cart, and examined it and me in silence. I closed my eyes and smoked on. Presently I *felt* that some one was looking at me,—a peculiar and uncanny sensation, which most people have at some time experienced. I opened my eyes, and saw six pair of vacuous eyes fixed on me as before. I observed, however, that another dogcart had entered the yard. It was empty, the driver being no doubt employed in the same way as mine. I again closed my eyes, again felt the sensation that some one was looking at me, again opened my eyes, and this time looked behind me. What a curiously magnetic effect the human eye has! Why do you look up when some one is looking at you? Certainly not always because the looker wishes you to do so; for sometimes it is

just from his intense anxiety to escape observation that he looks so hard. And so it was on this occasion; the look which attracted me should have repelled me. I saw a man walking hastily out of the yard: his eyes, which were stealthily fixed on me, told plainly that he wished to escape observation. On my turning round he at once stood still; and, though he continued to look at me, his whole expression changed from eager watchfulness to stolid unconcern. To look at him now, he might be one of the peaceful inhabitants of Soham. There was nothing remarkable about him at first sight, but as I felt sure that his was the eye whose influence I had felt, I examined him pretty closely. He was short and plump, and might have been any age between twenty-five and forty-five. His hair was red, fiery red, but his beard and moustache were a comely auburn. His face was tanned, by exposure to the sun, to a colour which harmonised well either with his hair or his beard. His eyes were small and pig-like; they were utterly devoid of expression, but at the same time conveyed an uncomfortable sense of concealed intelligence and observation; and this feeling was intensified by the rapidity with which they traversed their contracted orbit. He was dressed in a somewhat horsey morning suit of sober colours.

He endured my survey without winking. I felt unaccountably provoked by his stolid gaze, and turned away. As we drove out of the yard I caught his eye again; he had turned on his heels just enough to enable him to watch me as I drove up the street, and his hot little eyes remained glued to me to the last. I thought no more of him for the time, but the phantom would not be laid. In the early daylight at Newcastle station I thought I saw two pig-like eyes looking at me over the collar of a huge Ulster; and at Edinburgh I caught a glimpse of a short, stout clergyman, with a beautiful auburn beard, who again reminded me of the unwelcome stranger.

Then for the first time it struck me that I had seen the man of Soham, or some one very like him, before; who was it? Suddenly memory came to my aid. "Rufus Hickman, by all that's mysterious," I exclaimed, "revisiting the haunts of his youth!" I thereupon fell into a reverie on Rufus, which lasted till I reached Perth. The substance of my recollections of that remarkable man I shall embody in the next chapter; but I little thought, as I laughed over his memory, that the express by which I travelled would shortly deposit at Perth station the plump person and golden head of Rufus Hickman himself.

II.

When I was at Cambridge there existed (and I believe there still exists) opposite the main gate of Trinity, a club called the Athenaeum. It corresponded in some respects to the Bullington at Oxford, and in a social point of view was the leading club in the University. It was small and select,

convivial and easy-going. The atmosphere was certainly not conducive to study, but reading was not impossible: its members passed examinations and took degrees (*sometimes* honours) like other people. Again, their way of living was expensive, but if a man wished to live economically he was allowed

to do so without being sneered at. At the same time, I am bound to admit that the prevailing features of the Club were sport and conviviality. In the matter of sport our tastes varied. We had a horsey element who hunted, drove, rode with the drag, went frequently to Newmarket, and were supposed to be in the secrets of the leading stables there. The rest of us from time to time did homage to the horsey contingent, by putting into sweepstakes and going to the Cambridgeshire and Two Thousand in a body, and betting mildly on the odd and even horses. Others played tennis, rackets, and cricket. Boating alone was eschewed; it was too exacting, and required too regular and unconvivial habits. Others devoted themselves to amateur theatricals at the A.D.C. (short for the Amateur Dramatic Company), which I believe has become a permanent and celebrated institution.

As to matters convivial, we dined a good deal and supped a good deal; but we were scarcely free agents in the matter. The only legitimate burden we had was the Athenæum supper, which the members gave at their rooms in turn. But by prescriptive usage the old dining-clubs—the Beefsteak and the True Blue, as well as some more modern—were for the most part recruited from our ranks. Again, thanks to the extremely bad dinners such of us as were not noblemen or fellow-commoners were given in the college halls, and the inhuman hour, four o'clock P.M., at which we were expected to eat them, we seldom dined there; and this led to much unnecessary expense, for which the dons and the college cooks were directly responsible. For the bad dinners the cook was to blame in the first instance; but then the dons were

bribed to silence by getting a good one, and gave us no redress. As to the hour, our theory was that the cook fixed it so as to make it impossible for us to eat even that which he set before us; and that some peculiarity in the digestive organs of the dons (whom we always regarded as more or less than human) enabled them to connive at it without discomfort. At first we attempted to dine frugally. But, alas! the dinners gradually increased in luxuriousness, and in the end, I believe, more was spent on our daily dinners than on all the other entertainments put together. Meanwhile the college cook pocketed our money and grew rich.

To this Club I was elected through the good offices of some of my old schoolfellows; and one rainy day in November I was taken to the rooms to be formally introduced. I was first taken into a back room which was used as a smoking-room. It was quite empty. The reason soon appeared. I heard one loud squeal proceed from another room; it was immediately suppressed, and was succeeded by a silence broken only by an occasional murmur of satisfaction and expectation, which evidently proceeded from a considerable number of persons.

"What on earth is that?" I asked.

"Oh, they're only painting Rufus, I suppose," said my friend; "let us go and see it."

We rushed into the next room and found it crowded. On a settee or sofa in the middle of the room there lay a short, stout gentleman—not apparently of his own free will, as two members of the Club were sitting on his legs and two were holding his hands,—but his features were placid, and his eyes closed; his struggles were over. A tall dark man (Langton by name, who was noted for his skill in scene-

painting at the A.D.C.) was engaged in painting the victim's face. In his right hand he held a quill the feather of which served as a paint-brush; over his left arm was thrown a handkerchief, while in his left hand was an ink-bottle containing red ink. Every now and then he darted forward and dashed in his colours over brow, nose, and cheeks, then drew back and surveyed his work; then rubbed out or smudged some of the colouring with his handkerchief; then dashed in some more colour, and finally threw his instruments away in disgust.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I do not pretend that even my art could do justice to those carrots any more than it could reproduce the auburn of that beard. But I did hope (it has, I may say, been the dream of my professional life) to produce on those there cheeks and nose, on that cold expanse of white, on that middle distance, if I may so term it, a mezzotint which, without unduly detracting from the glorious fire of the carrots, should bring them into closer harmony with the golden hues of the beard. I have failed! With these imperfect tools success is impossible. But I do not despair. I shall attend my sitter again shortly. Now, who is for whist?"

At these words the meeting broke up. The *sitter's* legs and arms being liberated, he disappeared with the rapidity of a clown in a pantomime. Where he went, and how he removed the blotches of red ink, I know not; but in five minutes he reappeared spotless and in friendly conversation with two of his persecutors. Strangely enough, everybody seemed to ignore the recent performance, and I had some difficulty in getting information. All I learned then was that the victim was Hickman of (I may

call it) St Botolph's; that he was known as Rufus, or Joe Hickman —being called Rufus on account of his hair, and Joe on account of his fatness; that he answered to Joe but objected to Rufus, and would accept the latter *sobriquet* from nothing under a peer or those of his friends who were able and willing to thrash him if he demurred. In answer to further inquiries, I was told, curtly, that "I should see enough of him soon." I had therefore to content myself with looking at Hickman. He was stout and plump. But why waste words? He was the image of the stranger who attracted my attention at Soham, except in two points: first, his hair, as distinguished from his beard, was cropped close, so as to mitigate as far as might be its fiery hue; and secondly, his face was not sunburnt, but a very faint pink. It was this comparative pallor which offended the eye of the artist, and led to his well-meaning attempt to reconcile the conflicting colours; it was absence of pallor and length of hair in the stranger which prevented me from sooner connecting him with Hickman.

That night I went to an Athenæum supper at Magdalene. I found Rufus seated between Langton and one of the men whom I had seen sitting on his legs. Things seemed changed. No longer the butt of the party, he was engaged in singing a song of his own composition, in which various members of the Club were lampooned with, it struck me, not too much good-humour. Nobody else seemed to think so at first, and the song was much applauded. In a few minutes, however, a very powerful youth named "Bull" Vernon (no doubt one of the lampooned), who had been engaged in finishing a large plate of lobster-salad, rose with

great deliberation, and having provided himself with a stick and a handkerchief, abruptly withdrew the bard's chair; then darting upon him, in a few seconds, with a little assistance, which was cheerfully given, he trussed him adroitly and pushed him under the table, where for a considerable time he remained, no one paying the slightest attention to his alternate entreaties and abuse. Vernon was the Hercules of the Athenæum. He was a man of action though of few words, and was one of those who by right of strength called Hickman Rufus.

From what I saw that day, so much was plain that Rufus was the recognised jester of the Club. I soon perceived that, like some of the jesters of old, he was a fool with a purpose, although our easy-going friends did not care to see it. The truth was, he was a very shrewd fellow. He held a scholarship in his college, and while he was apparently leading a jovial life, he was reading hard at odd hours. I only found this out by accident, as he never spoke of his reading. Another thing which I found out by degrees was, that he really had scarcely a taste in common with the other members of the Club. He could not, or at least did not, ride or play games; he had no head for wine; and smoke was poison to him. But for some good and sufficient reason, like the Hon. Mr Deuceace, he, to his great bodily discomfort, sacrificed his individual tastes in all these matters. The only sport in which he took the slightest interest was racing. Even as to this he seemed indifferent; but when he condescended to converse on the subject, he betrayed a marvellous acquaintance with the names of horses and the state of the odds.

He certainly managed the men he cultivated to admiration. He

knew exactly when to play the fool, and (generally) whom he might attack with impunity. He also knew when to be serious. Being really a shrewd, clever man, he could give his noble patrons excellent advice when they got into scrapes. Nor was his assistance confined to advice. If a man of sufficient consideration required a few pounds in a hurry, Rufus, although avowedly a poor man, could always help him in his difficulty; and he was known more than once to coach the same class of man for his little-go or other examination with the best results, where the legitimate coach had failed. Lastly, his manner was bluff and independent, and did not in the least convey the idea that he was a toady—but he was.

What perhaps endeared him more than anything else to the undergraduate mind was, that he had an excellent eye for a practical joke, especially at the expense of the University authorities or of the town. His was the mind, though not the hand, which removed the "whistle" signal from the Newmarket line and planted it, in the early morning, in front of the late Dr Whewell's windows. By his efforts a regular supply of geese, ducks, goats, and other creatures (on one occasion a roe-deer) was furtively introduced into college quadrangles and with difficulty expelled by the whole strength of the college. He organised what he called a commission to inquire into the condition of the smaller colleges, with special reference to the habits of the dons, the outrageously impudent proceedings of which must be left to imagination. I may state, however, that a second visit to St Catharine's Hall having been found necessary on account of the obscurity and importance of the subject, the meeting of the

commission was hurriedly broken up on account of a threatening and Zulu-like movement on the part of the men of the place, who had observed the proceedings at the first meeting with silent indignation.

He was also the founder and secretary of an antiquarian society, the object of which was to collect curious brasses and other objects of interest from the ancient town; but the museum was kept not in his rooms but at Vernon's. I remember being shown a remarkably fine brass, two feet by one and a half, which was said to have been found on the door of a carver and gilder in Petty Cury, who was evidently ignorant of its value. I have also seen that curious antique, the knocker of the House of Correction, which Rufus removed with his own hand one dark night—the only occasion on which he was known to expose himself to personal risk. Having secured the knocker, he was carrying it to the museum by a string under his gown, when, happening to pass Sergeant Robinson of the police force, he was so much elated as to say, "Good-night, Bobby." At that moment the string broke and the knocker fell. With admirable presence of mind Rufus snatched it up and tore on to Parker's Piece, where he lay panting till the gallant sergeant, who had no lantern, groped his way past.

He had not the same objection to his friends getting into trouble, as I found out to my cost. And this brings me to a curious habit he had. Rufus delighted to dress himself as a cad—not as a Cambridge cad, which is a distinct species, but as a mechanic or labourer—and follow the proctors on their rounds. The disguise was complete. Dressed as a gentleman, to do him justice, he looked a gentleman. Dressed as a

cad, he looked a born yokel,—a stolid, heavy, and rather respectable boor, with no more signs of intelligence than a pillar letter-box.

One night he got me proctorised, not, I believe, of malice prepense, but from sheer devilry, to see how I should look. I had been playing all day at Fenner's, and had gone to dine with one of the eleven in his rooms on King's Parade, without going home for my cap and gown. About 10 P.M. I was proceeding to my rooms in the market-place when I saw the proctor coming towards me past the door of St Mary's. I bolted round the corner of King's Parade, and should certainly have escaped if a cad who was standing at the corner had not "named" me.

"Go it, Measter Morton! old Bowling's gainin' on yer!"

The moment my name was mentioned it was all up. A cheerful voice behind said—

"You need not run, Mr Morton, I know you;" and the proctor—Young of King's, with whom I had been playing that very afternoon—came up, proctorised me gaily, and passed on.

I turned angrily on the cad who had betrayed me, and found the small eyes of Rufus Hickman fixed upon me with an idiotic expression. I failed to see the humour of the thing, and treated myself to a handsome assault upon him on the spot;—a rash proceeding, as his uncouth yells, uttered in genuine Cambridge-shire, which I cannot reproduce, brought to his rescue a lot of cads who thought a town and gown row was going on, and I with difficulty escaped to my rooms.

Time rolled on, and Rufus's curriculum was drawing to a close. He had made several influential friends, who would have been of the greatest use to him, as I have no doubt he intended they should be, if he could only have kept his

temper for three months longer. In three months he would have been safe, as you cannot paint a man or take similar liberties with him in a London club. But it was not to be. One fine October day the whole Club went to see the Cambridgeshire run at Newmarket, with three exceptions, Rufus and two young fellows, the Hon. Richard du Cane and George Ashton, who had been in the Club for only six months. The two gentlemen last named having been gated (that is, having been ordered to remain in their lodgings or college after a certain hour in the evening) for some breach of discipline, and having broken their gates (that is, failed to remain in their rooms or college as required), were with special reference to the Newmarket week required to report themselves at the hours of 12 noon and 2 and 4 P.M., which made it impossible for them to go to Newmarket, and indeed out of Cambridge. They wandered about in misery all the morning, and reported themselves at noon; then they played billiards for an hour; then they lunched heavily at Lichfield's and reported themselves again. At this point, their resources being exhausted, they repaired to the Athenæum, intending to smoke the next two hours away. Unhappily, instead of going straight into the smoking-room, Du Cane, in an evil moment, looked into the reading-room. There sat a solitary man, Rufus Hickman, writing letters. Things had gone badly with him that morning, and he was in a very crusty humour. No Cambridgeshire for him. His elder brother had, by letter received that morning, flatly declined to advance a small but necessary sum. Secondly, he had just had a very angry interview with Dr Blowitz, the senior dean of his college, who had recently been made

a proctor, and signalled his accession to that office by at once detecting Rufus in his rustic attire. Not content with dealing with him according to law *qua* proctor, Dr Blowitz felt he had a duty to discharge as dean; he accordingly had that morning severely reprimanded Rufus, putting the very worst construction on the disguise, and gated him at 9 P.M. for a month. There had been very plain speaking on both sides. Lastly, his coach had told him that he could not guarantee even a second class in the approaching tripos. It was this moment, when, I believe, he would not have endured even the master-hand of Langton, that these two young fools selected for their first attempt to paint him. Here they thought was a find for a dull afternoon. With a view-halloo, Du Cane bounded into the room and seized the pen with which Rufus was writing. He was just stretching out his hand towards the red-ink bottle, and Ashton had just laid his hand on Rufus's collar, when two very unexpected things occurred: the Hon. R. du Cane was knocked down by a well-planted left-hander in the eye, and the red ink was thereafter emptied on his face; Ashton was knocked out of time by a similar blow on the nose. By the time the young men picked themselves up, Rufus had vanished.

This was the news that greeted us on our return. We did not waste much pity on the amateurs, because, as Langton explained to them, Rufus was a royal beast whom only certain privileged persons were entitled to draw or paint. We were more disturbed by the arrival of a note, addressed to the secretary of the Club, in the following terms:

"ST BOTOLPH'S, October 18—.

"SIR,—I beg to inform you that

I do not desire to remain any longer a member of the Athenæum Club. Be so good as to remove my name from the list of members.—I am your obedient servant,

“GEORGE HICKMAN.

“HON. RALPH DAYRELL,

“*Hon. Sec., Athenæum Club.*”

“George or Joseph or Rufus Hickman, I shall do no such thing. But, I say, what's to be done?” said Dayrell.

As the committee were all present, they at once sat on the letter. We were annoyed at what had befallen our jester, and it was resolved that next day a select sub-committee, consisting of the Earl of Braykebacke, chairman, Mr Langton, and Mr Morton (myself) should wait on Rufus and bring him to reason. Vernon begged so earnestly to be added to the number, and made so many promises of good behaviour, that against our better judgment we consented. Du Cane and Ashton good-humouredly empowered us to offer a full apology on their behalf.

At noon next day the deputation met at the Athenæum, and proceeded towards St Botolph's. We soon missed Vernon. “Where has that fellow gone?” said Langton. Vernon reappeared, coming out of a stationer's shop with a small bottle of red ink in his hand, the cork of which had been thoughtfully removed.

“Now, Vernon, we must have none of that,” said our chairman. “Very well,” said Vernon. We passed Vernon's rooms; he again disappeared, but soon overtook us. We reached St Botolph's without further delay, and walked into the inner court. As we did so, we observed a red fox-like head being cautiously withdrawn from an upper window. Rufus was *chez lui*; but his outer door or “oak” was closed,

which is a delicate way among university men of saying “Not at home.” We knocked and shouted, but no reply was vouchsafed.

“I thought as much,” said Vernon; and quietly drawing some most burglarious tools (the antiquarian museum tools, in fact) from his pocket, in an incredibly short time he forced the lock of the outer door. A skilful application of his foot to the inner door about the region of the lock opened it, and the deputation entered the room.

“Good morning, Hickman,” said Braykebacke.

“Good morning, Rufus,” said Langton and Vernon.

“Good morning, Joe,” said I.

No answer. Rufus was seated in a corner of the room, with his back to the wall, and close to a window which looked into the court. In front of him stood a good-sized square table, covered with books. As he sat, looking silently at us, Rufus would have looked like a Roman senator waiting to have his beard plucked, had it not been that he showed signs of resistance—having securely “castled” himself behind his table, and armed himself with a very formidable wooden ruler. The deputation, other than Vernon, sat down opposite Rufus. Vernon kept moving about the room, ostensibly looking at the pictures; but he disturbed us greatly by incessantly appealing to us by signals and production of his ink-bottle, whether the time for action had not come. Rufus never lost sight of him. After an awkward pause Rufus said to us collectively—

“Well, can't you speak? Don't sit looking at me like a pack of fools.”

Braykebacke at length found his tongue. He spoke very slowly, and rather formally—this was his natural manner, and not affected.

"Do try to be civil, Hickman. The committee of the Athenæum have asked us—(now, do be quiet, Vernon)—to ask you to reconsider your resolution to leave the Club. I am sure—(Vernon, I must beg you to sit down)—we should all miss you; and, ah—Du Cane and Ashton are quite ready to apologise."

The silent stare of the pig-like eyes was too much for him, and he paused.

"Now Joe, old fellow," Langton broke in, "don't be a fool. It shall never happen again. And I'll tell you what, as an inducement, I solemnly promise never to paint you again. I'll abjure my arts—

'I'll break my brush,
Bury't a certain fadom in the earth,
And deeper than did ever plummet sound
I'll drown my ink-pot.'

"Stop that theatrical rubbish," said Rufus, not fiercely, but in a dry metallic voice, which he maintained throughout the interview. "My Lord Stickleback, Mr Sidescenes, and gentlemen,—I feel deeply the honour you have done me in breaking open my door, and visiting my humble apartments. In reply to the lucid address of the noble earl, I have only to say that I have already lost too much valuable time and money in the society of spendthrifts, fools, and toadies, to which, my lord and gentlemen, you have the honour to belong, in one capacity or another. Now, good morning."

This astounding and unlooked-for speech took our breath away. The style was in palpable mockery of Braykebacke, who was fond of making little set speeches, in preparation, it was supposed, for his duties as an hereditary legislator. "Stickleback" was an invention of the moment, but "Sidescenes" was a very cruel hit. Two years before, some one had ventured to

call Langton by this name, on the strength of his scene-painting powers. He endured it apparently without objection for a week, at the end of which time he suddenly and incontinently knocked down a man for so addressing him. The name had not been heard since then. He flushed with rage to the tips of the ears, and said between his teeth, "Rufus, I shall have to punch your head."

"But for why, Sidescenes? What says your poet?—

'*Sidescenes* and *Rufus*, what should be
in that, *Rufus*?

'Why should that name be sounded more
than yours?'

Don't be ashamed of your name, old fellow."

Vernon, who was getting restive, made an aggressive movement. Rufus turned grimly on him.

"Don't do that, or I'll shy this ruler at your head. But take care, my gentle burglar and rose-water thief, my *vir trium literarum*,—a paradox, my Vernon, you being innocent of letters,—I keep a proctor. I can see old Blowitz's nut at this moment. I'll call him if you move, and show him that" (pointing to the door), "and your museum to boot; as your Horace puts it, '*illi robur et æs triplex*;' I'll show him my oak and your collection of brasses."

At this point Braykebacke, having recovered from the double shock he had sustained, said with dignity—

"If you can't behave like a gentleman, Hickman, we had better go."

But here Vernon became unmanageable, and, without uttering a word, "went for" Rufus in earnest. Down went the table, books, ink-bottle, and all; the intrenchment was stormed, and Vernon's huge hand was on Rufus's collar. But

it was too late; Rufus opened the window and called out in a shrill voice—

"Blowitz! Dr Blowitz!—help, proctor! thieves!"

From a window opposite we saw a bare coot-like head shoot swiftly out, look hither and thither, up and down, and then as rapidly vanish. A panic seized us. For good and sufficient reasons none of us were desirous of meeting the proctor. We had no time to lose, as we knew he was only looking for his cap and gown; so down-stairs we rushed with one accord, and made for the gate. As we

swept past the p.
we heard the swish
he bounded down th.
at a time. As we cross
court a sheet might hav
us. Breathless and discon.
gained the street, and retur.
the Club a saddened and discredited
deputation.

Rufus remained obdurate, and did not return to the Athenæum. He took his degree in a few months, and left Cambridge, and disappeared so completely that I never saw or heard of him from that time until he reappeared in so questionable a shape at Soham.

III.

From Peterborough to Perth is a tedious journey, even by the Flying Scotchman, if you cannot sleep. I reached my destination, a few miles from Perth, about eleven o'clock on Sunday morning, tired and hungry. I have not yet mentioned that I was bound on a visit to my old friend Langton, with whom I had kept up acquaintance. He had for some years rented a small shooting near Perth, and I had visited him there more than once, the last time being two or three years before 1878. I thus knew something of the country and of the neighbours.

After I had dressed and breakfasted, Langton said—

"Charlie, I am going to take you to church this afternoon."

"Well, my dear fellow, to tell the truth——"

"Oh! I know you're tired and not inclined for it, but there is a man you really should hear; I think you'll like him."

"All right; but surely you don't mean old M'Murdo?"

"No, no; that's all changed. The laird had a deadly quarrel with him because he presumed to demand

an addition to his stipend; and the result was that Mr Macdougall not only took the law of his parson, but on being worsted and cast in costs, renounced Presbyterianism, and became an Episcopalian two years ago. Nay, more, he proceeded to introduce Episcopacy into the Strath. He engaged what he calls a chaplain, and is building a chapel within his grounds. It is not finished, and service is at present held in a room, or rather a loft, in the village, to which I shall take you."

"How about this chaplain?"

"You must know that the first was a failure. He was tall and Ritualistic. Macdougall, who is stout and Low Church, objected to him on both grounds, and finally drove him forth for hinting at the feasibility of using incense in the aforesaid loft. His canonicals belonged to the laird (so at least the laird said); of these he was stripped, and they now adorn a shorter—and quite a different sort of person."

Accordingly to the temporary chapel I was taken. After ascending a steep wooden staircase, we found ourselves in a long, low-roofed

room, in which stood several benches, a reading-desk, and a harmonium. Twenty or thirty people were present. The laird's only daughter and sole heiress played a voluntary on the harmonium, at the conclusion of which we heard a heavy creaking step ascending the stair. I happened to be looking towards the door. Had I Rufus on the brain? I saw slowly rising as it were out of the earth first the top of a red head, next two pig-like eyes, then a long auburn beard, and finally, a plump body enveloped in a surplice twice too long for it. I felt little or no surprise. I merely whispered to Langton, "Rufus, isn't it?" He nodded affirmatively, and grinned with delight.

If I had experienced any doubts they would have been removed when he began to read the service. The voice was the same clear dry voice which I knew so well. I could just see his eyes over the reading-desk. They were unemotional, intelligent, and alert as ever. He did not look a day older than he did at Cambridge.

After reading the service, he preached a short but ingenious discourse. His subject was interesting,—the character of the patriarch Jacob; but his treatment of it was unique. Differing from many eminent divines, he held that the patriarch's duplicity was not only not blameworthy, but laudable and necessary in the circumstances, looking to the persons with whom he had to deal. But he warned his hearers that it was not every one who was entitled to judge for himself in such a matter, and that it might be dangerous for them even to think of a line of conduct which it might safely be left to the discretion of him, their priest, to adopt or reject as he thought proper. The laird's face during the sermon was an interesting study. Pride in the tal-

ents of his *protégé* contended with strong dissent from the latter's assertions of priestly superiority.

Service over, we descended to the street, where we found the laird waiting for us. Patrick Macdougall of Castle Dougall in the county of Perth and Dougallachlan in the county of Argyll, was a stout thick-set man of about sixty years of age. He looked and was good-humoured; but his choleric temperament was surely indicated by his face and neck, which, when he was excited by argument or opposition, swelled so much and grew so purple, that you felt he must surely take a fit if you did not at once apologise and give in. One of his own jokes produced much the same effect. As became a Highland laird, he always wore the kilt when at home. He had seen a good deal of the world, but notwithstanding was in some matters extremely simple.

"How are you, Langton? Glad to see you here again, Mr Morton. Well, how did you like the sermon?—an improvement on old Joe M'Murdo, eh? He was a trifle hard on Laban—a trifle hard. Clever man, though. You nearly missed him; he only returned this morning from burying an uncle in the south."

The funeral must have been on Newmarket Heath, thought I; perhaps it is the Westminster Abbey of racing men.

"By the way," continued the laird, "he says he was at Cambridge with you and Langton."

Here the laird was seized with a fit of choking, evidently produced by the recollection of some exquisite joke. While he was recovering we moved on, Langton walking a little ahead with Miss Macdougall. I waited patiently for an explanation. At length, after many gasps, he said—

"Sad dogs you must have been

in those days, you and Langton. Who would think it to look at you now? But tell me, was there really such hard drinking in your time? I'm told you were four-bottle men. I thought that sort of thing had gone out with a former generation."

"I think his reverence has been as hard on us as he was on Laban," was all I could say, struggling as I was between natural indignation and disinclination to abuse the laird's chaplain to his employer.

"My dear sir, don't think I'm blaming you. Bless you! I envy you your wonderful digestion and enormous recuperative powers. Four bottles of young, fruity, generous Cambridge port at a sitting! It's like a dream. You should have lived in the beginning of the century. But come now, joking apart, you must have had some rare fun in those days. What about the doctor's bell, eh, you dog? I have laughed by the hour at that story. Who would have thought it, to look at you?"

This was too bad. Not content with taking away my character by gross exaggerations of Beefsteak orgies, Rufus had fathered his own devilries on me as well; I suppose, in case I should attempt reprisals. I laughed uneasily. I could not trust myself to speak. After a short pause the laird drew close to me, and, pointing to Langton, whispered hoarsely—

"Has he given it up yet?"

"Given up what?" I asked.

The laird made a pantomimic gesture which is popularly understood to represent private drinking.

"You know I feel bound as a father," he began to explain, mysteriously; but here Langton and Miss Macdougall, having reached the avenue gate of Castle Dougall, stopped and looked round. The laird guiltily withdrew his nose from my ear, and presently bade us

good-bye, pressing us to come soon and see our old friend.

Our old friend indeed! Dreams of my childhood! I fear it is not always unmitigated bliss to meet an old school or college friend after a long interval. Things are no longer the same. You have changed, and so has he, both physically and socially. You are introduced to a giant of six feet two, in whom you recognise your fag, whom you used to kick and order about. He could now take you up in one hand, and you feel small. Or you recognise in the puny man whom you meet the monitor who strained his prerogative, and "whopped" you for disrespectful treatment of his person at football, and he feels small; while you also feel uncomfortable on recollecting what fools your poor old father made of himself and you by writing to the 'Times' on the subject. If the change is social, so much the worse. You have nothing in common, and are both inclined to wish that the bond of old acquaintance did not exist. Now here I was doomed to be brought face to face with a man whom I used to treat with habitual disrespect, and who had evidently been avenging himself by blackening my character.

As we walked homewards Langton gave me an animated account of Rufus's arrival at Castle Dougall, which is too long to be reproduced in full. Whence he came Langton could not tell; but he met him one day at dinner at Castle Dougall, looking as if he had lived there all his life.

"How did he receive you? did he recognise you at once?" I asked.

"Confound his impudence! He held out two fingers, and said, 'How are you, Sidescenes?'"

"He's not much changed apparently. But how does he get on with old Blowitz? I thought that

these were the doctor's happy grinding-grounds."

"Oh, he limed his venerable friend's twig pretty well. I had the pleasure of being present when he did so; and as I had no great love for Blowitz, I did not feel bound to interfere. I'll tell you about it if you care to listen. You remember, perhaps, that for several years Blowitz rented a cottage belonging to the laird. Last year he brought as his *alumnus* Lord Downish, the Marquis of Bottisham's eldest son, a young man of amiable disposition but decidedly ritualistic tendencies. Blowitz, as you know, is quite of a different way of thinking. I must also remind you that there are two things the mere mention of which goads the laird to the verge of explosion — poaching and ritualism. You will now be able to appreciate the following conversation between the laird and his chaplain, which took place last June in my hearing:—

"*Macdougall*. I have good news for you, Hickman; I am going to furnish you with a clerical playmate. My old friend and your old master, Dr Blowitz, is coming to me again. Of course you knew him well at St Botolph's?

"*Rufus*. Intimately—once. (The intimacy, I believe, was confined to Rufus being occasionally proctorised and gated by him.) But there has been a coolness between us for a year or so. I differed from him on a point of ritual, and he took it ill.

"*M*. Why, I thought you would agree down to the ground. He is very moderate, is he not?

"*R*. So moderate that he is all things in turn. His last craze was ritualism. He tried it in the college chapel last year, and the fellows had to interfere.

"*M*. (*flushing violently*). A ritualist, sir! I enjoyed the pleasure

of Dr Blowitz's society for three months last year, and saw not a trace of that abominable delusion.

"*R*. Perhaps so. I was told that Downish talked him over when he was reading with him last year. But no doubt he is tired of it by this time.

"*M*. (*growing purple*). Mr Hickman, sir, if what you have said is true, I vow and declare (here followed a composite oath which the laird always used when extremely angry) that tired or not tired of it, that man shall not set foot in house of mine.

"*R*. I'm very sorry I said so much, Mr Macdougall. No doubt it was merely a passing whim. As a companion he's charming; though now that I don't shoot, I should not see much of him if he did come.

"*M*. Shoot! Blowitz shoot! Why, he never handled a gun in his life.

"*R*. Well, he was not much of a hand with the gun; he liked snaring better. But many is the good day's sport I've had with him.

"*M*. Why, he always goes out in a tall hat and tail-coat! You're taking your fun of me, sir. Have a care!

"*R*. But, my dear sir, his dress was the very thing that told. He always had a pocket classic with him, and when birds went off the land he used to drive them back by walking up and down reading Homer or whatever it was aloud to himself. When he was challenged his dress and venerable appearance insured him respectful treatment; and his habit of trespassing was regarded merely as one of the eccentricities of genius.

"*M*. (*with forced calmness*). You said something about snaring, sir.

"*R*. Did I? Oh yes; I must tell you some day about his snaring Lord Hardwicke's silver pheasant.

It would amuse you, sir. He's a great naturalist, as you know—dear old fellow! I've seen him crawl a hundred yards on his stomach to get a pot-shot at a wild duck, with Plato in one tail-pocket and a gin in the other.

"*M. (gasping).* Ha! humph! that accounts for the fine collection of stuffed birds the old humbug was always bragging about.

"*R.* It's not a bad collection. I've seldom seen finer birds than a pair of grouse with feathered legs, and all the rest of it, that appeared in it last winter. He said he got them on the stooks, whatever that means.

"*M.* The stooks! *My* stooks! I'll stooks him. Gentlemen, I vow and declare (and the laird, who

had hitherto spoken little, simply because he was nearly speechless and asphyxiated with rage, rose to his feet, brought his fist down smartly on the table, upset his wine-glass, and then and there pronounced on Dr Blowitz sentence of banishment from Strath Dougall and excommunication from his fellowship for evermore; denouncing him in one breath as a pervert, a poacher, a humbug, and a low fellow)."

At the conclusion of Langton's interesting tale, I said—

"I'm afraid Rufus has limed more twigs than the doctor's," and I thereupon told him the uncomfortable jokes with which the laird had entertained me on the way home.

IV.

The reader may not unreasonably expect that we are at length approaching an interview with the Rufus pure. So we are; I feel that I should not be dealing candidly with the reader if I did not tell all the humbling truth.

In a few days we received the expected invitation to shoot at Castle Dougall. We went, and were met by the laird and his keeper and dogs. Rufus was not there; he was better employed. We lunched at a corner of a wood not far from the castle, and had nearly finished when we heard proceeding from the wood peal after peal of merry laughter. The tones were feminine. Presently there emerged the lovely Helen Macdougall escorted by Rufus. Langton and I looked at each other. The same idea had occurred to us both that somehow the aforesaid laughter was connected with us and at our expense. Rufus, imperturbable as usual, showed no signs of

merriment. Langton thought his manner to Miss Macdougall familiar and offensive. Perhaps it was; but as *I* was not in love with the lady, it rather amused me.

I rose and advanced to meet him with all the cordiality I could assume.

"Well, old fellow, who'd have thought to find you here? It's quite like old times."

"It's really quite dramatic—Rufus *redivivus*, or the red *revenant*," broke in Langton, whose love for theatrical titles still survived.

"You are Morton of Trinity, I suppose?" said Rufus, unmoved. "Shouldn't have known you. It is odd to find you and old Side-scenes here. But the place is quiet and the whisky good, I suppose."

"You're not a bit changed, old man," I continued, with forced *bonhomie*.

"Can't say the same of you. You've grown middle-aged and fat."

This was most offensive, and, I need not say, utterly without foundation; but I struggled on.

"I could not think what had become of you. Why, it must be—how many years?"

"Can't say. I supposed *you* were dead," said Rufus with indifference, and turned to speak to Miss Macdougall.

Thinking that the interview was over, I had resumed my lunch, when I was surprised to be addressed by Rufus.

"What have you got there, Morton? Light claret? That's not like old times."

To my fury, a broad smile of intelligence appeared on Miss Macdougall's face, and the laird at once began to choke. Between the gasps he said—

"I should have apologised, Mr Morton, but I've nothing younger than '44 port in my cellar, and that's much too old for your taste."

I could only grin; no practicable retort occurred to me. I was a guest, and my host was combustible.

In a few minutes we again took the field. Miss Macdougall and Rufus departed as they came in company, and as they retreated, we again heard peals of merry laughter proceeding from the wood. Langton ground his teeth and shot badly—all the more so, because from time to time he caught sight among the trees of a very conspicuous scarlet cloak which dimmed but did not conceal the sheen of a head which always appeared in close proximity—a very pretty "study in reds" for a jealous lover's eye.

As the laird was looking for a lost bird, Langton came up to me and hissed into my ear—

"I shall be compelled to kill Rufus if this goes on."

Up to this time I had thought little of Langton's flirtation with

Miss Macdougall. He was a confirmed bachelor and a confirmed flirt, and had been in a similar condition a score of times to my knowledge and great inconvenience.

"You're not really in earnest, are you?" I asked. He assured me that he was.

"Do you think you have anything to fear from Rufus as a rival?"

"I do, indeed. He has got the laird's ear, and I feel sure that, at best, he has represented me as stage-mad and an imperfectly reclaimed drunkard. You have heard so much yourself from the laird's lips."

This was my last day in Strath-Dougall, and much as I disliked the idea of my friend marrying, I felt that something must be done at once, and that I alone could do it. I bethought me of my meeting with Rufus at Soham. I did not doubt that he had been at Newmarket on the sly, and the brilliant idea now occurred to me that by judiciously springing that mine upon him, or by insisting, to his face, on clearing the tarnished fame of Dr Blowitz, I might open the laird's eyes, or at least scare Rufus from the field.

I propounded my plan to Langton. He shook his head despondently, and said—

"It's no use, my dear fellow. The laird won't believe a word you say. But try if you like; matters can't be worse. You'll have an opportunity to-night, as we dine at the castle."

When we entered the laird's drawing-room that evening we found Rufus alone, seated at the piano playing chords and humming a song.

"So you've kept up your music," said Langton, whose irrepressible flightiness overcame his prudence. "Sing us your last composition—something Scotch, of course."

Without a moment's hesitation, Rufus carolled forth the following extraordinary mongrel to the tune of "Kate Kearney":—

"Oh, sound the sad bugle
O'er Patrick Macdougall,
Whose thoughts were as proud
As his conduct was frugal.
Oh, raise the wail loud
From Kirkcaldy to Youghal.
Oh, Patrick Macdougall ochone !

How true to the bottle !
How constant his nature !
So long as there lasted
One drop of the 'crature ;'
What a man to 'mak' siccar,
To perish the liquor ;
Oh, Patrick Macdougall ochone !

How reserved in the battle !
No chieftain less risky ;
At lifting the cattle,
No reiver so frisky ;
Red hand at the flaying,
Close fist at the paying.
Oh, Patrick Macdougall ochone !

Whether the ballad proceeded to narrate the laird's glorious death with his feet to the foe, or his ignominious expulsion from existence as a detected cattle-lifter ; or whether, as I suspect, no more of it existed in the fertile brain of the minstrel, we shall never know. Because just as Rufus was drawing out the last two syllables of Macdougall into a piteous "doo—oog—all," a door opened at either end of the room, and (as Langton in happier days expressed it) the heroine and heavy father entered, L. E. and R. E., and advancing to the front of the stage, struck in with the following recitative :—

H. M. "'Bugle,' and 'Macdougall'—why, that's about papa !"

P. M. (aside). "What the mischief are they singing about me ?"

Rufus at once ceased singing, executed a brilliant run, closed the piano, and spinning round on the music-stool, faced the heavy father with perfect calmness.

"A little thing of Langton's," he explained. "He calls it a cor-

onach ; but to my ear it smacks of the Irish. I should hardly have thought you had Irish blood in your veins, sir."

Now the laird not only took in extremely bad part any allusion to his own demise, but abominated the Irish all the more because his grandmother was an Irishwoman. He therefore became speechless with indignation ; but fortunately or unfortunately, before he could express his "vows," or Langton explain, dinner was announced. An eminently uncomfortable meal it proved to be. I took in Miss Macdougall, the only lady, and Rufus contrived to plant himself on her other side. I suppose Langton was sulky, and did not contest the point. At the foot of the table sat the laird, glaring silently at Langton ; and he in turn passed the glare on to Rufus, who received it as complacently as if it had been a sunbeam. Miss Macdougall was nervous and uneasy, and kept looking anxiously at her father and Langton.

I could not have chosen a worse time for springing a mine upon Rufus ; but time was short, and a triumphant twinkle in his eye at length goaded me to action.

"I'm so sorry, Miss Macdougall, not to meet my old friend Dr Blowitz here this year. What has become of him ?" I asked.

She looked nervously at her father and Rufus, and did not answer.

"You had better stop him at once," said Rufus to Miss Macdougall, in an abominably confidential whisper. (I thought he added "Helen," but of this I am not certain.) She nodded assent, and said to me in a low voice—

"Please, don't speak about him, Mr Morton. I believe he behaved badly to papa, and he can't bear to hear his name mentioned."

Now one of the most trying things I know is, after having to

listen to one side of a story or argument, to which you have a conclusive answer, to be adjured to hold your peace, on the pretence that the person whom you wish to confute or convince is unable, from ill-health or ill-temper, to discuss the matter with you, or, as it is usually put, has not strength to argue with you! I was loath to give in, and persevered.

"Dr Blowitz behaved badly! and to Mr Macdougall. Impossible! What did he do?"

"Do be quiet, Mr Morton," said Miss Macdougall, in genuine alarm. I followed the direction of her eyes, and at once saw in the laird's face, neck, and ears symptoms which promptly reduced me to silence. With a look of artless surprise, which I fear was a failure, I had to submit, and abandon that line of attack.

Dessert was on the table before I returned to the assault. This time, also, I addressed Miss Macdougall.

"Are you fond of racing?" I asked.

Fortune favoured me; Miss Macdougall, who had been silent and absent, became animated at once. She was devoted to racing, but had as yet seen nothing more exciting than a Caledonian Hunt meeting; had often asked papa to take her to Ascot, but he had never done so. Papa did not approve of racing, she thought; at least he said so.

"You need be at no loss for instruction," I said, looking with a meaning smile towards Rufus. "I have always regarded Hickman as a Gamaliel in turf matters."

Rufus shook his head, his face expressing much more forcibly than words could have done that I was simply joking in execrable taste.

"Come, old fellow, you can't deny that you have seen a race or two."

"I'm sorry I can't. But I have not been on a race-course since Gladiateur's year, when you and Langton preferred to travel home in the boot." (Now this was a serious anachronism. We all left Cambridge before Gladiateur's year.)

"I remember nothing about the boot——"

"I can quite believe that."

"But you're wrong, at least, about the year. We were all down by that time. Ah! you remember now, I see!" (Rufus exhibited more signs of discomfiture than I could have believed possible. I pushed eagerly on.) "I wonder you did not renew your acquaintance with the old heath when you were in the neighbourhood lately."

Rufus looked terribly solemn and severe, glanced at Miss Macdougall, and then fixed his eyes demurely on his plate.

"Oh, Mr Morton," said the lady in a loud aside, "have you not heard? Mr Hickman lost——"

"If he lost, I'm sorry I introduced the subject; but one consolation is, he had a treat last Tuesday."

"A treat, sir," said Rufus, sternly; "quite the reverse—it was a painful duty."

"Well," I said, addressing the company, "this is the first time I have heard the Cesarewitch called a painful duty!"

"On last Tuesday, sir," said Rufus with well-feigned heat, "I attended the funeral of a near relative. Well as I know you, I am astonished at your persistent bad taste."

Miss Macdougall rose abruptly and withdrew. Her departure was followed by an awkward pause. Here was a nice state of matters. My anticipated triumph had vanished in an unseemly wrangle, and my friend's cause was worse than before. No one would speak; so

by a strong effort I addressed the laird on general subjects, till time was called, and Langton and I could with decency bid good-night. We departed more deeply humiliated than either of us had felt since we fled from the presence of Dr Blowitz twenty years before.

I left Strath-Dougall next morning, in the full belief that next time I heard of Rufus he would be styled Macdougall-Hickman or Hickman-Macdougall, in right of his wife. But it was destined to be otherwise. Rufus fell by his own hand, or rather by his own singular temper, which now again, on the eve of victory, brought about his fall. In the end of last year I received the following letter from Langton:—

"GLENQUAICH, 3d December 1878.

"MY DEAR CHARLIE,—At length you may congratulate me. I am engaged to be married to Miss Macdougall, with the full consent of her parent. That consent would not have been obtained readily, or perhaps at all, had it not been for an auspicious event which occurred on Saturday fortnight—viz., the unexpected downfall and departure of the Reverend Rufus, who, up to that time, had flourished like a green bay tree. The precise cause of his fall is shrouded in mystery; but the facts known are these. On that evening Helen left her father and Rufus in the dining-room, about 8.30, apparently the best of friends. About nine o'clock, old Menzies the butler, happening to pass the dining-room door, heard the laird 'vowing and declaring,' in a loud voice; but as there was nothing unusual in this, he paid no attention. The voice soon ceased; and in a few minutes the door opened, and his reverence came quietly out and closed the door. He told Menzies to order the dog-cart at once. By the time it ar-

rived Rufus had packed his effects and was ready to start. Having mounted the trap, he beckoned to Menzies, and told him, in a whisper, to go to his master, as he thought he was unwell. Menzies rushed to the dining-room, and found it was so. The laird was simply on the verge of a fit, if not in one. The only intelligible words he spoke that night were, 'If it were not for your cloth, sir! if it were not for your cloth!' *My* cloth, he might have said, if he referred to Rufus's canonicals. He soon revived; but I have in vain endeavoured to discover what Rufus said to him. It must have been something personal and peculiarly to the point; but I have been warned by ominous flushings not to approach the subject again. The important matter, however, is that, with many vows, &c., he withdrew his veto to my engagement.—Ever yours sincerely,

"W. LANGTON.

"P.S.—Perhaps you will not be surprised to hear that the laird has again been received into the bosom of the Church of his fathers."

So ended my latest experience of Rufus Hickman. Will it prove to be my last? I dare not think so. Rufus is not the man to fade prematurely from the world, blighted by the consciousness of modest merit unappreciated, or crossed in hopeless love. If mutual antipathy can keep us separate I shall be safe; nay, more, if we meet only after intervals as long as the last, I can reconcile myself to meeting him *twice* (alas! it could in any view be only *twice*) again on the same terms. My present fear, however, is lest his baleful eye should light on these presents, and that "I shall be pincht to death," or otherwise punished in my person or character, for what I have written.

REVIEW OF THE SESSION.

THE session of 1878-79 has been remarkably long and remarkably eventful; and at its close we all feel that the country stands in a very different and more satisfactory and assured position than it occupied when Parliament met last December. If the course of legislation has been slight, and its results for a long time threatened to be insignificant, it is scarcely to be expected that, while foreign affairs have absorbed so much of the attention and energy of the country in Europe, Asia, and Africa, the ordinary details of domestic legislation can enlist the public sympathy. But the session of 1879 will be memorable in that during its course peace was restored to the three continents of the world, and the burdens imposed upon this country by the responsible relations of its world-wide rule have been provided for, during a season of unparalleled confusion and no mean effort, without increasing the taxation of the country. Whatever opinion Englishmen may hold in reference to the policy of the Ministry—whether they applaud it, as nine-tenths of them do, or whether they utterly condemn it—all admit that that policy has prevailed, and that alike in Europe, Asia, and Africa, the will of this nation, as interpreted and enforced by the Ministry, has dominated over all resistance. And whether we believe that our true safety lies in maintaining ascendancy, or that our duty, national and international, is best discharged by taking a foremost place in the regulation of the world's affairs, or that British interests require and justify a determined vindication of them against

present menace and future peril, all must rejoice that those ends can be attained with so little of actual sacrifice and effort. People may differ as much as they please as to the true character of the English policy abroad during the last four years; but all must admit that it has been successful, and carried out at trifling cost.

The chief interest of the period we are reviewing lies in the complete success with which the main provisions of the Treaty of Berlin have been carried out, and the pacification of Eastern Europe triumphantly effected. A confused and deadly struggle had raged for a couple of years between the various forces in the Balkan peninsula and Asiatic Turkey. It had resulted in a treaty between Turkey and Russia which ostentatiously disregarded the Treaty of Paris and the rights of this country, and left the Ottoman empire in the possession and at the mercy of Russia. But that treaty had, at the instance and on the demand of this country, been submitted to a European congress, and the arrangements, both of Paris and San Stefano, were superseded by a new settlement, modelled in accordance with the will and interests of England, for the execution of which the steady, patient efforts both of the Cabinet and the nation were required during twelve months of sustained resolution. At every pause or halt in the progress of that settlement we have been favoured, at the hands of Sir William Harcourt and others, with elaborate denunciations of its whole character, and equally elaborate prophecies of its inevitable failure. The country has steadily turned a deaf

ear to these periodical lucubrations; but their gross infraction of every rule of political decency and patriotic self-restraint was none the less deplorable because it had become too habitual to excite either wonder or comment. There has been no period since the Peninsular war when the Opposition of this country has so openly and unhesitatingly played into the hands of the enemies of their country. To encourage and stimulate Russian public opinion in favour of violating the Treaty of Berlin, was worthy of politicians who invoked the hostility of Russia to the Turk, and upheld as a war of liberation the most transparent schemes of unscrupulous aggression. Seldom has the Nemesis of failure and disappointment so speedily overwhelmed the sinister and clumsy machinations of a disappointed faction. One by one their most confident predictions have been falsified, and one by one the main provisions of the Treaty of Berlin have been steadily executed. The whole of the Ottoman territory has been evacuated. Russian troops have withdrawn beyond Roumania. Austria has been successfully planted on the road to Constantinople, and has taken up a position which protects her residuary interest in the present Ottoman dominion. The autonomy of Eastern Roumelia has been organised, the Prince has been chosen, and the organic law of Bulgaria marked out. The new organisation of the populations of the Balkan peninsula, and the new relations thereto of the Ottoman Government, have been gradually taking shape, and have marked a most important stage in the new, and to all appearance lasting, settlement of South-east Europe. Those populations have been freed alike from Russian domination and Ottoman tyranny

and oppression. At the close of the session we have Sir Charles Dilke himself coming forward with a motion in favour of a still more perfect execution of the Berlin Treaty, which, it appears at last, was not so completely devoted to resisting Russia as to be unable to provide for due reforms in Turkey and sufficient vindication of the claims of Greece. The Government claim to have rescued the Greeks from the danger, or rather the disastrous calamity, of absorption by the Slavs, which it was one of the objects of the peace of San Stefano to effect. They have extorted from Turkey a variety of concessions to the Cretan Assembly, till there is reason to hope that good government may be established in Crete. They have done their best with regard to the provinces of Asia Minor, where we have incurred by the Anglo-Turkish Convention so much responsibility. Reforms in the police, the judicial system, and the revenue, have been urgently demanded. But the fact remains that the Turkish Government is incurably bad, though it is impossible violently to subvert it without adding largely to the miseries of mankind. We are convinced that an important step forward has been taken during the last year in securing better government and an improved condition to the Balkan races. And as regards the Asiatic provinces, the present Government is the first which has laid down the doctrine that Great Britain has a political duty to discharge, and may hope in no distant future to reap advantages from a new political and commercial connection. The first attempt to turn the light of European regard upon these provinces and peoples has been made; and, to quote Mr Bourke, "the state of things revealed by the visits

of our consuls is most revolting. The misconduct of the Pashas, the corruption and extortion of the officials, are as bad as anything that has been heard of." One thing is clear, that Great Britain will willfully neglect her most obvious duties to herself and to the security of her interests in the South-east if she now relapses into the state of supine inactivity which she observed in the years which succeeded the Crimean war. If the authorities at Constantinople value the prolonged existence of the Ottoman empire, they will eagerly co-operate in the endeavour to reform the institutions and government of their subjects. Something may be done to mitigate their condition, although generations must elapse before Asia Minor will become a really prosperous and well-governed country. But at all events, the principle is now established as a cardinal maxim of European policy, that the whole political condition of the Ottoman empire, within and without, in its internal economy and its external relations, is under European control; that as that empire gradually falls to pieces—if such be the fate in store for it—the Powers, and not Russia singly, are to provide for the future; and that aggression from whatever quarter is not to pursue its course unheeded, but must (if not checked as it ought to be at the outset) submit its achievements to international modification and revision. The Treaty of Berlin—representing as it does the patient determination of Europe, first, to insist upon the belligerents bringing their projected arrangement before the Congress, and second, to execute in spite of every obstacle its own unanimous behest—has shown that however weak public law may at times be shown to be, it lives and is in full vigour in all things

relating to the Ottoman empire. England, which has so deep an interest in the fate of that empire, has shown that she is able under wise and resolute guidance to reorganise and reanimate Europe; and the lesson will not be without advantageous results in securing general tranquillity, and possibly the continued progress of these Eastern populations. The great bloodless triumph of statesmanship which has been finally consummated during this session has been a glorious chapter in English history. The whole country is satisfied and proud of it. It has not merely secured British interests and restored the just influence of this country, but it has laid the foundations of Balkan prosperity and independence. The cost of these achievements in money has been exactly twice as much as was spent in the Alabama humiliation, and about one-fifteenth of what was incurred during the Crimean war. They have been effected without a blow; the array of British force in the Sea of Marmora and the approach of a small contingent from India being sufficient indications of political resolve to secure unanimous support, and to win the necessary concessions from an exhausted rival.

So far with regard to Europe and Asia Minor. But when Parliament met it was found that the great Eastern Question had not merely roused a fierce controversy in the east of the Mediterranean; its echoes were reverberating throughout Central Asia, and up to the north-west boundary of India. If Russia persisted in the scheme of which the Treaty of San Stefano was the defiant and public announcement, war with Great Britain was sooner or later an inevitable necessity. It was evident to Russian statesmen that one of our

weakest points was the north-west frontier of India. Not merely had there been during the last thirty years constant disturbances in that quarter with the restless and martial tribes which menaced our borders, but the Ameer of Afghanistan had latterly adopted an attitude towards us of sulky hostility, which, with a view to Russian exigencies in Europe and Russian *prestige* and advantage in Central Asia, was adroitly encouraged to acts of defiance and resistance. Nothing could be plainer than the position in which we were placed. Our whole relations to Afghanistan were coloured by the disastrous events of 1839-42; the Ameer thoroughly hostile, and believing his position to be impregnable for defence and powerful for purposes of aggressive enmity, had thrown himself into the arms of Russia, and, contrary to treaty stipulations, had ostentatiously welcomed a Russian embassy at Cabul, whilst he scornfully refused admission to the English. With a frontier which the highest military authorities declared to be inadequate and vulnerable, with a deadly enemy in its immediate neighbourhood, and with a defeated rival in the background, eager to inflict an injury upon us without the risk of war, the Ministry had no alternative but to bring Shere Ali to an immediate reckoning, and have it clearly understood whether our treaty relations with him were to be observed. The moment Shere Ali was compelled to drop the mask which he had worn for some years, war was the inevitable result. He stood revealed as the ally of General Kaufmann, the foe of Great Britain. And then followed a deafening controversy in this country as to the motives of this insane barbarian, and as to the treatment

which he had received at the hands of successive governor-generals. The Duke of Argyll wrote a ponderous book, a large portion of which was devoted to show that Shere Ali was a paragon of long-suffering political virtue, scrupulously just and truthful in all his dealings, but overborne beyond the limits of human patience by the grasping chicanery and violence of Indian officials, inspired and directed by the Cabinet at home. It was eagerly represented that we were on the eve of disasters such as resulted from the former Afghan war. Though the criticism of our past diplomacy could easily be dismissed as the outcome of mere and sheer fanaticism, the confident predictions of impending evil came from experienced Indian statesmen of the highest reputation. A few weeks passed, and Shere Ali's power of resistance vanished. The British forces were firmly established in occupation of the mountain barrier which commanded the military roads, and our superiority was completely demonstrated. Shere Ali fled and perished, the Russians withdrew and washed their hands of the whole affair, and Afghanistan lay completely at our mercy. The Government is entitled to a grateful recognition of the vigour and promptitude with which they acted at a peculiarly trying moment, when the execution of the Berlin settlement was only in its first beginnings, and the public mind at home was eagerly bent on peace. The Indian officials are entitled to the credit of having carefully planned their expeditions in a manner which secured, without check or reverse, a speedy triumph over difficulties of no ordinary magnitude. The British public vindicated their capacity for self-government and their possession of sound political

judgment when, notwithstanding the bewilderment occasioned by the warnings of Lord Lawrence and other high-class Indian statesmen, as soon as the true state of the case was revealed, they gave to the conduct of the Ministry a general and determined support. The despatch of Lord Cranbrook, which summarised the preceding negotiations, was devoured with eager interest; and if its value be measured by the instant and wide approval which it commanded, it deserves to rank as one of the greatest State papers ever issued to the nation.

In the Affghan business as well as during the far more serious development of the Eastern Question in Europe, the Ministry was enormously strengthened by the mistakes of the Opposition. The leaders of the Liberal party are statesmen of political sagacity and experience; but they are, unfortunately for themselves, liable at every crisis of importance to have the conduct of their party wrenched from their grasp. They have at least fifty followers who consider themselves quite competent to the task of leadership, and who vie with each other in applying to every new combination, long before the actual facts are disclosed, the infallible principles of Liberalism. The consequence is, that when the case for the Ministry is disclosed, and the time is ripe for parliamentary discussion, the Opposition is intent upon vindicating its own leap in the dark, and is itself far too deeply pledged beforehand to a particular view to apply adequate parliamentary criticism to the case before it. Prudence would suggest to any reasonable politician that the task of criticising, after the event, a course of conduct upon which the Ministry must decide before the event, is eminently favourable to a

display of sagacity and the assumption of superior wisdom. Voluntarily to abandon that advantage, and to decide without the assistance even of official information upon any course which may seem at the moment to be popular, is the most suicidal course which a great party in Opposition can devise—a sure sign that the party is utterly disorganised, and has degenerated into a rabble. We have seen the results first in the matter of the Bulgarian agitation and St James's Hall conference, and then in regard to the Affghan committee, and the speeches framed in accordance with its views. On both occasions the Liberal party took up wholly impracticable positions, which it was impossible to sustain when Parliament met, and which completely deprived them of all influence over the subsequent course of events. Their leaders were quite unable to formulate in Parliament any propositions which would in the least degree express the rash conclusions which had been vehemently proclaimed in the country. The more sober-minded members of the party had no alternative but to support the Government, leaving to the authors of their political misfortunes the task of venting on platforms, in pamphlets, articles, and even in volumes, an inarticulate and incoherent indignation. The true character of the controversy which raged over this Eastern Question will never be discovered in the pages of Hansard. The records of public meetings, and fugitive literature in all its forms, must be ransacked in order to do justice to Liberal wisdom, and the moderation of Liberal party spirit in the presence of a great national crisis.

The Liberal party having been, in regard to all the foreign affairs of the last four years, reduced by its own mismanagement and precipitate

conduct to a mere cipher, it followed that the Ministry remained undisputed masters of the situation. Though the Liberal party must be held accountable for the first outbreak of the Russo-Turkish war, history will hold the Ministry accountable for every step which was subsequently taken. It will tell how in Europe peace was preserved, British interests vindicated, and the Ottoman empire reconstituted on a basis of greater security abroad, and more efficient guarantees for good government and progress within than it has ever before enjoyed. And as regards the war in Afghanistan, the results which have been so speedily and successfully accomplished amount to nothing less than the complete security of the Indian frontier; the establishment of a friendly ruler on the Afghan throne, and of friendly relations with the Afghan nation; and last, not least, a complete check to Russian intrigue on our Indian borders, and the decisive ascendancy of British influence. The manner in which Shere Ali was betrayed to his ruin will operate as a warning for many a year to our Indian neighbours not to violate their engagements to us in rash dependence upon Muscovite assurances.

While Liberal animosity and opposition to the Afghan war, with all the prophecies of disaster which it occasioned, are forgotten, or have dwindled down into a mere discussion as to the true arithmetical proportion in which India and England should share its expenses, it remains for Englishmen to estimate the true value of its results. In place of the huge disaster and Indian bankruptcy which were so freely promised, we have the treaty of Gandamak. The Indian empire is rounded off and completed. A strong, independent, and friendly

ruler of Afghanistan is established, or on the point of being established; and the dreams of a succession of great Indian governors-generals have been quietly accomplished. The withdrawal of Stolitoft's mission from Cabul at the demand of Lord Salisbury, and the third article of the treaty which places the foreign relations of the Ameer under the control of the British Government, are an effective notice to the whole of Central Asia that, in the celebrated language of Lord Lytton, "the British Government will not tolerate interference on the part of any other Power in the internal affairs of Afghanistan." We trust that the moral and pecuniary support of the British Government will enable Yakoob Khan to maintain his ascendancy against all competition. It will no doubt be part of our Indian policy to uphold him, though every reader of the treaty will have observed that Lord Lytton has been as chary as Lord Mayo or Lord Northbrook of giving any such personal or dynastic guarantee as was latterly demanded by Shere Ali. Yakoob has been generously treated, and will no doubt gladly rely on British support. The efficiency of that support is enormously increased by the treaty and the results of the war. We have been welcomed in the district of Candahar as liberators and not as foes; we have established posts upon the Afghan border which dominate the regions beyond; we hold the Khyber Pass and the Kurum and Pishin districts, and a British force virtually looks down upon Cabul. Candahar will be restored to the new Ameer, since, as Sir Henry Rawlinson has shown, to dis sever it from Cabul would have inaugurated a policy of dismemberment which Russia and Persia might have turned to their

profit. The moral effect of the rapid and splendid victories of our army has, we are assured, been immense at all the native Courts of India, in Central Asia, and in Persia. Whatever consequences the Russian expedition now marching eastward from the Caspian may portend, the experience of the past few years, from the first occupation of Quetta down to the recent treaty, must convince both friends and foes that the interests of Great Britain and India, however much they may be derided by the Opposition, are being carefully guarded and energetically maintained by the Government, not the smallest part of whose claim to the confidence of the country rests upon the brilliant success of their Indian policy.

It must be regarded as a distinct misfortune to the Government and to the country, that at a time when the execution of the Berlin Treaty, and the progress of a just, necessary, and inevitable war in Afghanistan demanded all their attention, a new complication should have arisen in South Africa. Before the session closed, the Zulu war had been carried to a triumphant conclusion; but the recollection of the impatient annoyance with which Sir Bartle Frere's precipitate measures were received in this country, will doubtless long operate as a warning to colonial governors. The policy pursued may have been admirably conceived as far as South African interests exclusively were concerned. In fact, as far as policy was concerned, it had been demonstrated in these pages to be inevitable long before it was adopted. But a more inopportune moment for carrying it into execution, as far as the general interests of the empire were concerned, it was impossible to choose; and when was discovered that Sir Bartle

Frere had acted contrary to the letter as well as the spirit of his instructions, there were many who would have rejoiced in his immediate supersession. The belief at the time that his services were indispensable, or other influences, prevailed. But it is necessary that public opinion should insist upon the discipline of the public service being scrupulously maintained. It is always possible for a colonial governor, in his representative capacity, and in the exercise of the high authority with which he is necessarily invested, to drag the Cabinet into a war which they completely disapprove. In this case Sir Bartle Frere was warned against precipitation. He knew perfectly well that the Government had ample reasons for preferring that the war which he contemplated, and which doubtless was sooner or later inevitable, should at least be postponed. He had not obtained from them the smallest sanction to his immediate measures. He was perfectly well able to stand on the defensive till such time as the Government at home might otherwise direct. There was no overpowering necessity to incur the defeat at Isandula; and if we were strong enough to hold our own after that defeat, we were strong enough to do so before we were weakened by it. Sir Bartle Frere stands convicted of having himself forced on a struggle which was not forced on him by immediate necessity; which, as a matter of policy, was for the Cabinet and not for him to decide upon; and which was at the particular moment chosen for it, and owing to its earlier incidents, calculated seriously to discredit our political position. No success will serve to justify this dangerous and insubordinate conduct. The safety of the empire requires that wars of policy, on the

part of colonial governors, should be firmly prohibited. In these days of telegraph and steam communication, absolute and unavoidable necessity alone should be deemed to justify any war abroad which is begun without sanction from the Cabinet. It seems to us that this principle is the most important one involved in the whole of this South African business—the principle of maintaining due subordination to the Cabinet, and thence to Parliament, on the part of colonial governors. Unless it is firmly maintained, we have no guarantee in an empire like this against the eventual confusion of public affairs. The present instance ought not to be condoned. It is of the highest importance that the case should not be converted into a precedent, or, however indirectly, stamped with official approval.

In the first dismay which was occasioned both by the manner in which the war was precipitated and the serious disasters which clouded its commencement, the Government majority sank to 60 (its normal amount) in a House of 546 members; and an undeserved outcry, following the usual course in such matters, was raised against Lord Chelmsford. A military reverse is not necessarily a proof of incapacity, but it is indirectly an enormous addition to the difficulties of a general. Its inevitable tendency to weaken his authority and the confidence of his troops is strengthened by the full force of the public opinion which is excited at home, and is not very capably led or formed. That in spite of all these serious aggravations of his difficulties Lord Chelmsford should have patiently developed his plans, and have steadily and surely gathered his forces together so as to strike the decisive blow at Ulundi, not merely

retrieves but establishes his military reputation. The sense of public justice was satisfied, and the pleasure of victory considerably enhanced, by the reflection that the general who had planned and matured the attack had remained to reap the glory of its decisive results. It is none the less satisfactory, however, that the whole political and military control will be vested in the hands of Sir Garnet Wolseley, fresh from his consultations with Ministers at home; and we trust that the affairs of our South African colonies will shortly be settled on a secure and satisfactory basis.

These are the three main questions which have absorbed the attention of Parliament during the last session,—the execution of the Treaty of Berlin, the events which culminated in the Treaty of Gandamak, and the Zulu war. Upon all three of them the conduct of the Ministry has been successful; and in the first two of them, comprising the whole of the vast Eastern Question, their policy has been completely triumphant. The position of this country in Europe and in Asia has been immensely strengthened, materially as well as morally. The results relatively to Russia are more advantageous than were gained by the Crimean war, and have been effected without loss of life and with but trifling expenditure of money. No one who compares the position created for us by the Treaty of Paris in Europe, and by the Indian Mutiny which followed it in Asia, can fail to see that the present state of things is infinitely more satisfactory. In place of the ill-concealed manoeuvres of Prince Gortschakoff and the Emperor Napoleon, and the cold indifference of Prussia, we have now the cordial unanimity of Europe in its sanction

of the new arrangements. Austria at Novi Bazar, whither she is steadily moving, England at Cyprus and dominating Cabul, with India quiescent and satisfied, the Balkan provinces reformed and contented, and Asia Minor beginning to arrest the attention of England, seem to guarantee a durable and prosperous settlement. The Administration under whose watchful care and determined policy this settlement has been effected, has reaped its reward in the sustained confidence and support of the country, and the establishment of a memorable reputation.

Mr Gladstone, remarkable as it seemed, was practically silent on the Zulu war. There must have been some cogent reasons, best known to himself, for this singular abstention. Coming when and as it did, the Zulu *imbroglio* was a tempting theme for an Opposition champion to descant upon, and might have proved a far more advantageous ground of assault than the Bulgarian atrocities or Shere Ali's outraged virtues. Even in his recent article in the 'Nineteenth Century,' which brings to a focus the whole of his persistent complaints against the Ministry, the annexation of the Transvaal and the Zulu war are enumerated as 14th and 15th in a list of questions which it is said "lie off the beaten path of ordinary business," and "have been forced on our hands by the wilful and spontaneous action of the existing Ministry." They are then dismissed without another word; and if this uncompromising antagonist of the Government has, whilst drawing attention to the subject, no fault to find with their conduct of this unfortunate business at the Cape, it may be assumed that that conduct really admits of no cavil. The key-note

of this extravagant indictment is a challenge to posterity on the comparative merits of the late and present Ministries. The verdict of history, he trusts, will not proceed from a mere comparison between the two; "for small indeed would be the distinction of gaining the prize in such a sorry competition." No doubt Mr Gladstone's Ministry, as well as his career, has much to excite the enthusiasm of his admirers. The questions with which it dealt, equally with those of its successor, "lay off the beaten path of ordinary business." But its one object was to see how many bills it could pass, and how many interests and institutions it could harass and destroy. No one denies to it the merit of energy; but it was the energy of destruction, culminating in suicide, and in the ruin of a great political party. That ruin was the most complete and the most durable of all the works of its hands. While bill after bill was being forced through Parliament, and the Prime Minister was consuming all his energies in oratorical display, the affairs of the Liberal party, and what is of far more importance, the affairs of the empire, were seriously neglected. The fall of the one was just in time to avert the serious confusion of the other. Mr Gladstone is a great parliamentary athlete and a great financier; but the guidance of a political party, the leadership of men, and the management of imperial affairs, have never been to his taste or within the range of his great achievements. He probably sees nothing but charlatany in any one of the three.

Accordingly, he denounces all participation in such subjects as the Treaty of Berlin, the Anglo-Turkish Convention, the purchase of shares in the Suez Canal, and

the mission of Lord Lytton, as "pernicious folly," distinct from the genuine business of Parliament, and breeding confusion in the finances. To provide for the security of India or of our numerous interests in the east of the Mediterranean, is to undertake "an intolerable mass of obligation and responsibility;" it is to barter away a character for unselfishness; it is to nauseate the world with the doctrine that "British interests" supply the final criterion of right and wrong. And then follows the old tale, which has been repeated *usque ad nauseam*, and to which no human being can attach any definite meaning. "Upon every contested question," he exclaims, "that has arisen in the councils of Europe, we have been the champions not of freedom but of oppression. Not an inch has been added to free soil through our agency or with our goodwill. Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Greece, perhaps Roumania—every one of them are smaller through our influence than they would have been without us. For the first time it can now be said with truth, that in the management of a great crisis of human destiny it would have been better for the interests of justice and liberty if the British nation had not existed." Mr Gladstone hammers away upon that topic. It is far too cloudy and vague to form the subject of serious discussion. The settlement proceeded on the ordinary practice of give and take, and all Europe sanctioned and approved it. The principle which dominated over it was that of setting limits to Russian aggression, checking future attempts, making the best provision possible for good government within the limits of the restored Ottoman empire, and adjusting the relative

pretensions of rival races. The same critics who denounce the treaty as unjust and oppressive, also denounced it as impracticable, and sure to lead to disastrous complications. During twelve months they have had it all their own way as prophets of impending evil. The Ministry has paid no attention to them. At the close of that period Lord Beaconsfield announced at the Mansion House that "this impracticable treaty has been carried into full effect. At this moment, notwithstanding reiterated prophecies to the contrary, there is not, I believe, a single Russian soldier in the dominions of the Sultan. The Emperor of Russia has fulfilled his engagements with dignity and honour; and is at this moment cordially co-operating with this country and the other Powers of Europe in a policy the object of which is to secure and maintain the general peace." With this final proof of utter want of sagacity and insight on the part of Opposition critics in their rash predictions as to the future, is it wise to pay too much attention to their denunciations as to the past? The predictions are scattered to the four winds, and their authors are covered with discredit. The denunciations remain to perplex us with their violence and bewilder us with their inconsistency. If these critics were so hopelessly mistaken as to what it was practicable to execute, may they not have been equally mistaken as to what it was possible for united Europe to resolve upon? Lord Beaconsfield's settlement has been both adopted and executed—two very strong points in its favour. Do these critics hope to persuade the country, not merely that a totally different settlement would have been intrinsically better, but that it would have had an equal

chance of a similar result? Is it nothing in favour of the existing settlement that it has terminated a perilous controversy in a manner satisfactory to Europe, and approved by large majorities in Parliament? Mr Gladstone is kicking against the pricks in urging his wild and fanciful theories on public attention. The public mind, which at first viewed them with amusement, is at length satiated and disgusted. If a year hence such an issue as that presented in Mr Gladstone's article is seriously offered to the country, the public, exulting in the practical enjoyment of peace with honour, will resent such a discussion as an insult to its understanding. Even now it is felt to be of no practical value—an inevitable outburst of personal and party discontent with Ministerial successes. The few who follow it at all merely note with amused indifference that the extravagance and absurdity of three years ago, which for a time covered us all with ridicule, have not yet entirely subsided. A few flashes here and there of eccentric and disordered genius only serve to illuminate the general satisfaction and contentment with the results of British olicity.

With regard to finance, Mr Gladstone complains that the Eastern policy of the Government could not be had without heavily paying for it; and that the duty of maintaining a just balance between income and expenditure, and of relieving the future by moderate present sacrifices, has been neglected. With regard to the first, the total amount spent was £6,000,000; and all sensible people consider that peace with honour was cheap at the price, more particularly when its achievement was effected in spite of all the efforts of an

Opposition not over-scrupulous as to the encouragement it afforded to the enemy. Even Mr Gladstone's achievement of "peace with honour"—the Alabama treaty—cost the country half of that amount. If three millions of money were, as Mr Gladstone says, "not worth a thought" in comparison with his peculiar form of peace with honour, which the country received with almost universal dissatisfaction, twice that sum is no criterion whereby to condemn his rival's "peace with honour" which closed a far more difficult and dangerous controversy, and was received by this country with almost universal acclamation. The one was the price of defeat, the other the cost of victory. With regard to the second complaint, what are the facts? At the present moment, and nearly ever since the present Ministry came into office, £2,000,000 a-year is spent in increased provision for the National Debt. The total amount devoted to that purpose in the present year is $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions. Is not that relieving the future by a moderate present sacrifice? Moreover, a million is spent every year in paying for Mr Gladstone's postponed liabilities—the cost of fortifications and barracks. That is relieving the past as well as the future by a moderate present sacrifice. Having regard to the circumstance that the present is thus weighted with the payment of $5\frac{1}{2}$ millions for the future and the past, and that it is also weighted with unusual depression in its trade and a series of bad harvests, the Government have proposed to defray the extraordinary expenditure resulting from the Eastern Question, the Afghan and Zulu wars, not by loan, but by an increase of twopence in the income-tax, extending over four

years—the floating debt occasioned thereby never exceeding the amount of one year's contribution to the discharge of past liabilities. Any arrangement more obvious, more sensible, more in accordance with Mr Gladstone's own precedents, it is impossible to suggest. No sooner are European complications over, than the Ministry reduce the army and navy expenditure by 3½ millions; "desirous obviously," says Mr Gladstone, "that the grey hairs of this Parliament may go down to the grave in better odour than that which environed it in the days of its vigour." The whole arrangement sounds to ordinary men of business like a satisfactory and healthy condition of the finances. We spread over four years the total expense of arranging difficulties which have been years in coming to a crisis, and which we hope will not recur for at least a generation. We at the same time contribute nearly 6 millions a-year to the liabilities of the past and the exoneration of the future. In other respects our financial system is unchanged. Mr Gladstone calls this "a financial policy such as all the Ministries of the last forty years would have disdained." Spreading extraordinary charges over four years is defended as a *via media* between payment and non-payment similar to Mr Gladstone's provision for fortifications and barracks. He denounces such a defence as "an invention of a group of false financial doctrines, unknown to our annals, to cover the shortcomings, the miscarriages, and the malpractices of recent finance." Mr Gladstone also quotes and comments upon a series of figures which show that during the last five years, notwithstanding the increased charges for debt, education, and the services, the taxation per head has been four shillings less

than it was the preceding five years. That also seems to us a proof that our financial affairs are not in a very desperate condition. The figures are as consolatory to the national creditor as they are to the tax-payer. Assume that the expenditure has been right, we doubt if Mr Gladstone, with all the weight of his financial reputation to back him, will ever succeed in persuading his countrymen that the Government mode of defraying it contravenes any sound principle of finance, or in the slightest degree savours of imprudence.

But then it appears that not merely is the condition of our foreign affairs and of our finances involved in inextricable confusion, but the condition of our liberties, "so far as it is liable to be affected by the views or claims of the Executive," is so intolerable, that the Parliament which has betrayed them ought in consistency "to vote monuments of civil honour to Stratford, to Laud, to Filmer, and to Sacheverel." We doubt whether Laud would have appreciated the homage of a Parliament which passed the Public Worship Regulation Bill; and in fact we discover that the total treachery to our liberties (which, according to Mr Gladstone, have vanished again and again so often during the last three years that there cannot be anything left to betray) consists in a certain doctrine "expressed with a portentous frankness and in a perfect calm" by the Attorney-General a session or two ago. It may be with a sense of relief that our readers will learn that the latest as well as the gravest peril to which our liberties have been exposed is, that at the crisis of the recent Eastern difficulties the Ministry ordered Indian troops to Malta, confident that Parliament, to whose ultimate authority they

admittedly deferred, would subsequently sanction the step. No possible objection can be taken to the measure except on a theory which involves the total inability of the Executive to take any step, however imperative may be its necessity, without previously obtaining the sanction of Parliament. The Executive might as well be abolished altogether if it were compelled, before it could act, to submit every resolution to the criticism of parliamentary debates and the experienced wisdom of provincial meetings. The conduct of Mr Gladstone and his allies during the autumn of 1876 rendered secrecy of action and reticence of speech a public duty on the part of the Cabinet. The failure of that remarkable agitation not only strengthened immeasurably the hands of the Government; it imposed upon them the duty, looking to its disastrous consequences abroad, of concentrating in their own hands the exclusive management of their policy, subject to the approval of Parliament. Both Houses strenuously and strongly supported them. Public opinion as decisively ratified that support. The nation triumphed over a faction, and its liberties are rendered more secure than ever when free institutions are found equal to the strain of grave complications abroad and reckless agitations within. The city of London, always foremost in vindicating public liberty, was foremost also in securing that triumph. As Lord Beaconsfield observed the other day, in language which was not the commonplace of compliment—

“It is the patriotism of the city of London that has supported us at this juncture. Men, and even classes, differing from us on common questions of policy, felt that the course which we recommended was that which the in-

terests of the country required, and throwing away all petty considerations of party connection, felt it their duty to uphold the Government, which endeavoured to maintain the majesty of the Crown and the power of the empire.”

However satisfied the city of London and the country generally may be with the management of our foreign affairs, and however little disposed Lord Granville and Lord Hartington may be, from motives of party prudence, to make the question of our foreign policy the test at the next election, there is one discontented statesman who will not recognise that he is beaten, and that his views upon the Eastern Question are as much opposed to those of the English people now as they were in the days of Lord Palmerston's first administration. Mr Gladstone at Chester reiterates his charges against the Government. He insists that the Liberal party shall go to the country upon his programme of accusation; and he threatens that unless the country comes to its senses, and, by returning a Liberal majority, redeem itself from its present serious dangers and mischiefs, he will retire from public life, convinced that further discussion is useless, and that only by long and painful experience will the nation be awakened to the consequences of its conduct. Perpetual scolding is a somewhat undignified occupation, particularly when it assumes that all the world is mad, and that the speaker alone is sane. Mr Gladstone has refused all responsibility of leadership. He will not lead unless he has a majority, and now he declares that unless he has a majority he will retire from public life. That is not the way in which the British public is accustomed to be dealt with. Its relations to its present statesmen

are not those of spoilt children—a compound of scolding, menace, and sulk. It is accustomed to deal with statesmen who enforce their policy with reason and moderation, and who are prepared to accept the responsibility and the consequences of its being adopted. Mr Gladstone does neither the one nor the other. He gives himself out to the world as a retired politician, who has shaken himself free from political responsibilities. But he insists upon retaining a post in the front of battle, gives his orders, and expects to be obeyed. Having utterly disorganised his party by his caprice and violence, he expects to be listened to when he indulges in the most vehement vituperation of his opponents, and prescribes no policy which is not animated by determined dislike of everything which the nation has achieved during the last four years.

If the results of the session as regards home legislation have from time to time been the subject of disparaging prophecy, it only shared the misfortune which attends the foreign policy and the treaties for which the Ministry is responsible. The prophecy in either case is falsified. The session which has solved the difficulty of Irish University Education, and laid with general concurrence the foundation of a system which will do justice alike to Protestant and Roman Catholic, merits no ordinary distinction. The Government Bill dealt with a most perplexing subject, one which had wrecked Mr Gladstone's Administration, whose attention to all subjects of domestic legislation precluded it, as we all know, from taking any interest in foreign affairs. Yet the Bill was promptly accepted, and speedily carried through both Houses—contrary, of course, to the general anticipation of Liberal wise-

acres. The happy result was due to the promptitude with which the Government seized a favourable opportunity offered towards the end of the session, which if neglected might not speedily recur. The O'Connor Don brought in a Bill upon the subject, upon which both parties declared themselves. In the debate upon the second reading it appeared that no considerable party would refuse moderate grants of money to assist university education amongst Roman Catholics, provided they had no strictly denominational application. Roman Catholic, or indeed any denominational endowment, whether of a college or university, was out of the question, and would have been generally condemned. But turning from institutions to classes, opinion manifested itself in favour of removing every practical restriction on the enjoyment of university education, and of assisting Irish Roman Catholic youths in acquiring general, as distinct from theological, education in their own university. It is extraordinary how simple is the solution, during lucid intervals of common-sense, of the most complicated religious difficulties. Primary education in England was baffled for years, till the difficulty of teaching the children of the poorer classes the rudiments of religion was handed over to school boards, and thence to school teachers, and then it vanished. Even in Ireland, justice to Roman Catholics can be secured when a favourable opportunity is seized; and when the moment is unpropitious to party controversy, wonderful is the unanimity which prevails.

The result is, that a university has been established in Ireland in which Roman Catholics can find shelter; the method has been devised by which such students can

be provided with such assistance as they may fairly claim; and though the parliamentary grant to such university is for the present dependent on annual votes, a more permanent provision may hereafter be taken into consideration if experience shows that it is desirable. The retention of parliamentary control over the grant and its application is in the first instance wise, and may be retained as practically expedient. The success with which this plan has been carried out, and at the same time the policy of denominational endowment avoided, has settled a very difficult question, and conciliates a considerable mass of Irish opinion.

The triumph of this Bill was all the more remarkable because of the inexorable rigour with which the Irish members have throughout the session treated the Government business. There is a "party of exasperation" in Ireland, which apparently was too unreasonable to be satisfied even with the proposal in the National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill to distribute amongst the Irish people £1,300,000 of the Irish Church surplus. Such perversity is only consistent with that steady policy of obstruction which aims at nothing less than paralysing the functions of the existing Legislature with a view to strengthen the claim for Home Rule. But what was far more important than the contumacious disaffection of certain Irish members was the appearance of an English party of obstruction. Even Mr Gladstone admits that the time occupied in the discussion of the Army Code was "improperly consumed." Night after night the flogging clauses were discussed with a vehemence which was obviously addressed to the constituencies; until at length Lord Hartington himself called his

more extreme supporters to order, and repudiated all responsibility for their conduct. As might have been expected, he was immediately menaced with revolt; but the utter failure of Mr Chamberlain's efforts to create an *émeute*, joined with the indignant repudiation of those efforts by the mass of the Opposition, served to give to Lord Hartington a position which it might have taken him years to create. To the astonishment of the whole country, after having vanquished disaffection with a word, and considerably advanced his credit with the House by the authoritative manner in which he dealt with its disorders, he threw away all his advantage, and reappeared as the humble disciple of his advanced followers, moving a resolution which handsomely submitted to Mr Chamberlain's views, and was decisively rejected by a majority of upwards of 100. It certainly brought the flogging excitement to a crisis, but it put an end to that ascendancy over his party and the House which Lord Hartington was rapidly establishing. Mr Gladstone declares that the time so "improperly consumed" was a mere drop in the water compared with the permanent aggression on the time of Parliament effected by the foreign policy of the Government. The executive Government, he declares, is the principal offender; the obstructionists, even the Irish obstructionists, are mere accessories. These latter have at the worst, according to Mr Gladstone, wasted ten days in order "to prove the incapacity of the House of Commons for its present work." The Government have consumed twenty-four days in the discussions upon fifteen subjects of their mischievous policy, not one of which, he says, has yet been adequately debated; and

"they have augmented many times over the necessity for devolving on some other authority portions of the business of Parliament." It is impossible to believe that this view commends itself to the bulk of the Liberal party, which took every opportunity of emphatically expressing its approval of Lord Hartington's indignant repudiation of those tactics. Only thirty-six members were found to question that repudiation; and the prolonged cheering which welcomed the leader whose authority had been vainly disputed was a demonstration in support of the authority and dignity of Parliament, and against the repudiated policy of obstruction. The subsequent mistake of Lord Hartington does not diminish the effect of that demonstration; and Mr Gladstone's written approval of obstructionist tactics will scarcely re-establish his reputation for good sense. The question, however, has been raised in the most distinct manner, How is the public business to be transacted? A policy of obstruction has been deliberately adopted by English as well as Irish members. It aims at bringing all legislation to a standstill, at paralysing the functions of Parliament. It has received the approval of Mr Gladstone; it has been finally coquetted with by Lord Hartington, in spite of his expressed repudiation. It is simply intolerable that the minority of a minority should put a stop to legislation; but the constituencies must have observed with anger and amazement the important measures which the Government have been obliged to withdraw, and the tedious progress which has been made with those that remain. The country will have to decide at the next election not merely the great question whether it desires that its em-

pire should be maintained and its power upheld, but whether the work of legislation is to proceed, and the usefulness as well as the dignity of Parliament vindicated before the world.

This policy of obstruction was all the more reprehensible inasmuch as, by common consent, all questions likely to agitate or divide public opinion were postponed for the consideration of a future Parliament. The Ministerial programme announced last February did not, having regard to the approaching dissolution and the probable absorption of public interest in foreign affairs, include any measures likely to arouse any vehemence of party spirit. The chief proposal was to substitute for the annual Mutiny Bill a permanent enactment consolidating the whole body of military law. It was over this measure that, irrespective of its merits, a struggle arose first between the Ministry and their Irish members, who, since the death of Mr Butt, have rallied round the irreconcilable Mr Parnell in the endeavour to demonstrate the inefficiency of our present parliamentary system. To change parliamentary procedure would probably consume the energy of a session, but is nevertheless becoming inevitable. The Select Committee of last year made its suggestions; the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought forward his resolutions: it took three nights to carry the first of them, and, not unnaturally, the rest were postponed. The encouragement afforded to obstruction by this proof of inability to prevent it, more than outweighed the advantage gained of prohibiting successive debates upon the motion to go into Committee of Supply. Accordingly, the Home-Rulers repeatedly moved amendments and divided the Com-

mittee on the Army Bill with no other object apparently than to prevent its ever being passed. The whole history of this measure is little creditable to Parliament. The Home-Rulers were reinforced by the advanced contingent of English Liberals, who strained every nerve, regardless of either the dignity or usefulness of Parliament, to lash up a little fictitious party excitement with the aid of the "cat." Certain concessions made by Colonel Stanley, with the view, doubtless, of effecting a compromise where circumstances and the very spirit and motives of his opponents did not admit of it, led to misunderstanding and reproaches, which, however ill founded, only served the purpose of the malcontents by increasing the excitement. Then followed the domestic disturbances within the ranks of the Liberal party to which we have already alluded. On their being composed, by the submission of Lord Hartington to the followers whom he had rebuked and defeated, but whose permanent disaffection he evidently feared, a regular party division, in which the Opposition was beaten by 106, took place, and progress was afterwards effected. The Bill was read a third time on the 18th of July, just one week before the Mutiny Continuance Act expired; and consequently the House of Lords was compelled to run the measure through all its stages without debate, so as to admit of its being passed into law within the time limited. The five months which were occupied in passing this measure were to a great extent wasted; and it is plain that, after all the efforts which have been made to reform and reconstruct the electoral body, unless the House is capable of reforming and reconstructing its own procedure, it

will decline in authority and reputation.

What with these obstructionist tactics, and what with the general demoralisation shown by nothing so much as by the spirit of insurrection against the constituted authorities of the House (the Speaker and the Chairman of the Committees), hardly any progress in legislation was made until nearly the end of July. In the last fortnight of the session, the Public Works Loan Bill, designed to protect the Treasury against the growing rapacity of municipal bodies, was carried, owing to the determination of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, rather than be beaten over it, kept the House sitting till past seven o'clock in the morning of the 12th August. It was mainly owing to the resolution of Sir Stafford Northcote, whose temper seems to be incapable of irritation, and whose powers of endurance appear to defy fatigue, that the outcome of the session was in the end satisfactory. The Queen's Speech congratulated the Houses upon the Acts providing for the appointment of a Public Prosecutor, and amending the law relating to the summary jurisdiction of magistrates, as tending to improve the administration of the criminal law. It also referred to certain alterations made in the law relating to Banking and Joint-Stock Companies as well calculated to conduce to the prosperity of this important portion of our mercantile and commercial system. The Irish University Act and the Irish National School Teachers Act, supplementing the Intermediate Education Act of last session, will serve to stimulate both the higher and primary education in the sister island, and to remove recognised grievances. A session cannot be said to be barren which

has produced those results, together with a codification of military law. On the contrary, the results are useful and important, and that they are so, in spite of all that has happened, is a considerable triumph for Sir Stafford Northcote. His leadership has devolved upon him at a most trying period in the history of Parliament. It is often challenged for want of firmness, but never in point of temper, discretion, and endurance. Under his guidance, whatever adverse critics may allege, the Government majority has always been sustained and sometimes doubled, and a fair account of legislative result rescued from the hands of a desperate and irreconcilable minority. On the other hand, the failures have been conspicuous; and notably the Criminal Code, which was drawn up by a Royal Commission, and the draft of which was carefully considered and improved by several of her Majesty's judges, never once received discussion in the House of Commons. The codification of the criminal law is no doubt a measure which will require mature consideration; but Parliament, during the session just closed, has shown no disposition even to approach it. Then there was the Bankruptcy Bill. The Lord Chancellor introduced it, and the House of Lords framed it—Earl Cairns having elaborately proved that the waste and injustice of the present state of things could be tolerated no longer. But the House of Commons late in the session cursorily referred to it, and no further progress was made. The measure was dropped, and all the evils denounced by the Lord Chancellor will continue to flourish unchecked, and perhaps stimulated, by the sense of the increasing impotence of the Legislature. The same fate awaited the Valuation

Bill, a Bill for the regulation of the Medical Profession, an Irish Grand Jury Bill, a Scotch Poor Law Bill, the County Boards Bill, and other bills of that class. The wonder is, not that these bills were dropped, but that any results at all were obtained in the face of that deliberate waste of time which has been sanctioned upon such high authority. The depressed condition of the agricultural interest, which is aggravated by the increasing importations of cattle from America, naturally formed the subject of considerable discussion in both Houses; and in the end a Royal Commission, in the labours of which the Prime Minister, it is understood, takes a deep interest, has been appointed to inquire into the causes of the depression, and how far they can be remedied by legislation. Mr Chaplin brought the subject before the House of Commons, and has been denounced by Mr Gladstone in the 'Nineteenth Century' for suggesting the immediate imposition of eight millions of protective duties. Not content with censure upon an individual member, Mr Gladstone is also extremely indignant with the Ministry for not manifesting the utmost alarm at the proposal. "Under their tacit sanction," he says, "every candidate of their party may shelter himself, and may delude the farmers and entrap their votes, by promising to them the vision of restored Protection." Mr Gladstone betrays from time to time considerable uneasiness as to the prospects of the next election, and as to the Ministry succeeding in "entrapping" another majority. But the views of the Government as to a return to protection, or even as to resorting to reciprocity, have been too distinctly stated by Lord Beaconsfield himself to admit of any doubt. The

Premier, in a memorable speech, demonstrated to Lord Bateman that reciprocity, which at one time was possible, and which a great party originally gave the country an opportunity of adopting, is now dead and buried. In his speech on Lord Huntly's motion he expressed considerable uneasiness as to the condition and prospects of the farming class. He declared that the causes of distress were too vast, too numerous, and too complicated to be recovered by any small adjustment of taxation. He could recall no period of agricultural suffering which, in its intensity, equalled the present. A succession of bad harvests, inducing a loss of general wealth to the extent of £80,000,000, accompanied with falling prices, which aggravated the farmers' losses, has depressed agriculture, commerce, and trade. Of these, agriculture has had to contend with increased importation, to an extent which has reacted on production so largely that a million acres have gone out of cereal cultivation. The volume, therefore, of our trade in agriculture has contracted, as well as its profits. In general trade and commerce the prices have fallen whilst the volume has not declined. If the causes of agricultural depression are as permanent as they are serious, rents must permanently decline, and the farming class will diminish in numbers and influence. No one can pretend that the depression of English agriculture is not of grave importance, politically as well as economically. It is a subject which requires the fullest investigation, and will demand a large share of public attention in the immediate future. The debates which have taken place in both Houses during this session upon that topic, are probably the pre-

lude to difficult and important discussions.

Two subjects of interest presented themselves during the session outside the contentions of our foreign policy and the squabbles over domestic legislation. The first related to the ordinary course of Indian affairs. Notwithstanding the deficit in the Indian Budget, the cotton duties were arbitrarily abolished; five millions were authorised to be borrowed in England; and it was decided not to tamper by legislation with the Indian currency or the price of silver. Mr Fawcett consequently carried the point which he has so persistently pressed upon successive Ministers; and retrenchments in expenditure were finally ordered, and are, not a moment too soon, being carried into effect. The second relates to the course of Egyptian affairs. Ismail Pasha was got rid of, not without the approval of England, and his son is appointed Khedive with "the support of powerful friends." In other words, the dismissal of Nubar Pasha and Mr Rivers Wilson by the Khedive, and the overthrow of the recently established system of European administration, have proved an abortive attempt to emancipate Egyptian government from the control of the Powers. England and France have apparently determined to render that control effective, especially in the matter of finance. The reticence of the Ministry and the forbearance of Parliament have been wisely exercised in reference to this subject. The relations of the Khedive to the Sultan, those of the latter to the Powers, the international jealousy between England and France in regard to Egypt, the reluctance to interfere by force of arms, the absolute necessity of England maintaining her enormous po-

litical and commercial interests in Egypt, and the critical state of Egyptian affairs, combine to render the regulation of our policy in that quarter one of the most difficult, delicate, and responsible tasks which the Ministry has to perform. It is creditable alike to Parliament and to public men that the difficulties have not been enhanced by outside interference, and that the judicious reserve of the Ministry has been as judiciously acquiesced in.

The personal vicissitudes of the session have been very few. The most noteworthy occurrence from that point of view has been the comparative quiescence of Mr Gladstone. His contributions to certain magazines have been as violent as ever; but both in the House and in the country he seems to recognise that time and events have been too strong for him, and that nothing remains but to acquiesce in the leadership of Lord Granville and Lord Hartington. So far as Mr Chamberlain's revolt may have been intended as a demonstration in favour of restoring Mr Gladstone to the place from which the "late leader of the Opposition" was to be ejected, its reception by the general body of the Liberal party, and by Mr Fawcett on behalf of the Radicals, showed that Mr Gladstone's capricious and inexplicable withdrawal five years ago is now irrevocable. Both Sir Stafford Northcote and Lord Hartington have maintained a pre-eminence which is practically undisputed, and their authority is strengthened by its continuance. No new reputation has been made upon either side, in either House. The long-deferred but complete ascendancy of Lord Beaconsfield seems to dwarf his contemporaries, and to forbid all attempts at competition. His

authority has grown immensely during his premiership, and, tested by the terrible ordeal of the great Eastern Question, has been confirmed by the almost universal belief in his courage and capacity. Amongst the independent members below the gangway on the Opposition side of the House of Commons—the quarter most congenial at the present moment to the development of senatorial ability—Mr Fawcett, notwithstanding his membership of the Affghan Committee, has maintained, and even increased, his reputation for ability to cope with the difficulties of Indian finance; and Sir Charles Dilke has made some clever but unreasonable speeches in reference to Cyprus, Greece, and the affairs of South Africa.

In the obituary the name of Lord Lawrence stands foremost on the roll. His great achievements have won for him a memorable place in Indian history. As Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, he pacified a new, turbulent, and important province, and largely contributed to the suppression of the Mutiny. If his foreign policy as Viceroy has not stood the test of time, it must be remembered that events have moved in Central Asia with startling rapidity, and that the "masterly inactivity" of 1863-68 must in fairness be judged by somewhat different considerations from those which apply to 1876-78. Outside the ranks of Parliament, but nevertheless with the deepest regret of all classes of the nation, the youthful heir of the Napoleons met his death whilst fighting under the English flag. Although such an event is neither of political nor parliamentary importance, its tragic associations are indirectly connected with the session. It was one of the most painful incidents of the Zulu war; and when we recall the

deadly hostility to this country of the founder of the Napoleon dynasty, the once friendly relations of England to the Second Empire, the welcome for years afforded to the Imperial exiles, and the circumstances of the Prince's death, the Government and people of France can scarcely misinterpret the vehement sympathy which was manifested at the Prince Imperial's tomb, or the

sentiment which accords to his memorial a place in our national mausoleum. The relations of this country to the Napoleon dynasty cover an eventful portion of our history, and they are terminated in a manner which rendered a sincere feeling of respect and regard an appropriate national sentiment, of which Westminster Abbey as appropriately will hereafter record the expression.

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SYRIA.—PART II.

ROUND ABOUT DAMASCUS.

THE first part of the road from Mukhtara to Damascus is little better than a staircase. The faculty of climbing, which is inherent in Lebanon ponies, enables them to overcome difficulties that would seem insurmountable in civilised countries; and although it was often necessary to dismount and drive my pony before me, he scrambled up the steep mountain-side like a goat, too well pleased to be rid of his burden to make any objections to the path he was called upon to travel. Even up here, amid overhanging rocks, and on the precipitous hillsides, every inch of available ground was cultivated, chiefly with vines. These are neither trelised nor dwarfed into standard bushes, but trailed over the rocks: the grapes are thus kept out of what little soil there is, and ripened by the heat of the stone.

This cultivation extended for about an hour, and ceased at the village of Khorabeh, the highest inhabited spot in the valley, and the limit of cultivation. Here I

found some traces of ancient ruins, the remains of walls composed of huge blocks of stone, some arches still standing, and all the indications of what may have been, in the time of the Crusaders, or possibly before that time, a frontier fort. We still had some more climbing to do before making a sharp descent into a wild, desolate valley; and then we found ourselves at the foot of the highest range of the Lebanon.

It was a long, dreary pull up the steep mountain-side, with nothing to relieve the fatigue except the views back over the country I had left. All around was bleak and barren: the path was so little traversed that it was a mere track; and I did not meet a soul after leaving Khorabeh till I reached the first village, at the foot of the mountain, on the other side. At the summit of the pass, which I estimated at about 6000 feet above the level of the sea, I crossed a patch of snow, and then, with a last look westwards, eagerly pressed on to the

view which I knew was awaiting me in the opposite direction.

The last few minutes before reaching the crest of a high mountain-range—when one has no idea of what is to be seen beyond—is always a period of most agreeable suspense and anticipation; and when the glorious panorama unfolds, and the extensive landscape bursts upon one in all its novelty and beauty, how amply does it compensate for the monotony and fatigue of the ascent! From the point where I was then standing, Coelesyria lay mapped out at my feet. To the right, the snowy peaks of Mount Hermon closed the prospect; and from its shoulder, stretching away northward, was the range of the Anti-Lebanon. Immediately below, the plain of the Buka'a, dotted with villages, and watered by the Litany, gradually tapered to the gorge by which that river forces its way to the sea through the Lebanon range, while it spread out, in all its rich luxuriance, in the opposite direction, as far as Baalbec, forty or fifty miles distant. Map in hand, I could recognise every village, and stood no longer in need of a guide—though I kept him with me—for my night quarters, though still distant, were almost visible. Then we plunged down the precipitous descent, and once more found ourselves in the midst of an abundant vegetation and a busy population. Travellers by the main road to Damascus and Baalbec are so familiar with the Buka'a that I will spare them a description of it, though I descended upon it by a little-known route, and entered it to the south of the tourist's track.

After a delightful plunge in the turbid waters of the Litany—for the heat of the valley after the snow-tipped ridge struck so sharp a contrast that a bath was doubly grateful—I pushed on into the

spurs of the Anti-Lebanon, reaching, a little before dark, the Christian village of Aithi, where I had some difficulty in finding accommodation. It was an inhospitable, uninviting place; and in this respect contrasted most unfavourably with the Druse quarters I had just left. The people first stared at me, and then quarrelled over me, the dispute being, so far as I could gather, who should *not* have the honour of entertaining me as a guest. After one or two vain attempts had been made to induce me to accept accommodation which an Irish pig would have scorned, I finally found my way to the best-looking house in the village, which turned out to be the sheikh's. As that dignity was absent, I was somewhat coldly regarded by the female part of his establishment, who, however, at last consented to put me up, on the distinct understanding that I was not to turn them out of the only decent room in the house, but share it with them. This prospect was by no means tempting, considering the operation which one fat woman was performing upon the head of another, the generally "insecty" look of the place, and the number of babies which were promiscuously lying about and squalling when they were not engaged in sustaining nature. So I wandered about helplessly, making vain attempts to force myself upon the hospitality—which was to be liberally paid for—of the owners of the best houses I could find; but I received nothing but grunts and scowls, until a dirty Greek priest, with an eye to the main chance, came to my rescue, and offered to turn all his women out of a relatively sweet apartment, have the mud floor watered, swept, and matted, and abandon it to me for my sole use and occupation for the night. I was thankful to close

with the offer; and half-a-dozen women were soon busily engaged sweeping, cleaning, and cooking, while all the neighbours came in to stare at so unusual a visitor. As I had some difficulty, in the absence of any interpreter, in making myself understood, the priest, who was very voluble, and absorbed with a desire for imparting information, triumphantly announced that there was a Syrian schoolmaster in the village who could speak English, or, at all events, had been educated in a missionary school; and he shortly returned with a very ill-favoured and unhealthy youth, who, on the strength of his advanced state of civilisation, seized me by the hand, and loudly exclaimed, "Good morning!" though the sun was just then setting; then pulling out an English and Arabic pocket-dictionary, and studying it for some time, he said, in a peremptory tone, "Can you eat a hen?" I had already, before his arrival, expressed my willingness to attempt this feat; but he was too proud of the tremendous effect his learning had produced on the bystanders to hide his talent under a bushel, and kept on repeating the question from time to time. It was his supreme effort. He said a good deal more, it is true, apparently under the impression that it was English, as he repeatedly referred to the book; but the sounds which he produced were inarticulate and vague; and he afterwards became so troublesome by his insistence that I should communicate with him by means of his dictionary, which he had great difficulty in reading, that I requested him to return to his pupils, if he had any. So far from his taking the hint, he established himself in my room for the evening; and even after I had politely pointed out the word "kick," as a hint that there were several ways of leaving a room,

he resolutely declined to move until I showed him the point of my boot, and indicated, as good-naturedly as I could, by signs, the method of its application, when he went out in high dudgeon, and I heard him abusing me all down the street. I have since learnt generally to detect at a glance Syrians who have received the advantages of a smattering of education, by the extraordinary insolence which distinguishes them, and a presumption and familiarity which are not at all justified by the very limited extent of their accomplishments. Other visitors I had who were by no means so offensive; and they sat and gossiped as I dined on "hen," and took me out and showed me the ruins of a Roman temple, in the centre of the village, manifesting a good deal of intelligent interest in their inquiries as to what its original use might have been. The chief industry of Aithi is pottery-ware; and jars and pitchers, made of the excellent clay in the neighbourhood, find a ready market in Damascus.

As the village is more than 3000 feet above the level of the sea, and I had still a slight ascent to make, the keen north wind struck chill when I started at six o'clock the following morning, though April was already far advanced. Crossing smooth grassy hills, I came unexpectedly, in about an hour after leaving my quarters, upon remains, which I stopped a short time to examine. They are near a spring called Ain Kenia, and consist of ruined walls still standing to a height of three or four feet, composed of huge blocks of stone, and which apparently enclosed two temples, each 20 yards by 16. In one were two prostrate columns and a carved capital; in the other, two fragments of columns still standing. I have not been able to discover the Roman name of the town by which

these ruins were evidently surrounded. Half an hour later, after traversing a pretty but poorly cultivated country, I reached the village of Jedeideh, on the Damascus road; and five hours later, found myself amid the shady groves on the banks of the Barada, and surrounded by all the indications of proximity to that queen of oriental cities, Damascus.

I was detained three weeks in Damascus, and was not sorry to avail myself of the opportunity which my stay afforded, of making some excursions in the neighbourhood. With a friend on a geological errand bent, I started one morning by the Aleppo gate, and following the broad road which leads to Homs and Hamath—and, if one follows it far enough, to Aleppo and Constantinople—reached in a couple of hours the large village of Duma. Here we met the *avant-garde* of a large caravan which was arriving from Baghdad; and I gazed with no little interest at the uncouth riders, who seemed as joyous as the crew of a ship just arriving in port after a long voyage. They had left the main body of the caravan behind them, while they went on to make preliminary preparations, and were, doubtless, eagerly anticipating the pleasure of plunging into the delights and dissipations of Damascus.

At an empty barrack a little beyond Duma the road to Aleppo and Palmyra turns to the north, while we continued on the Baghdad road, through richly cultivated country, though the gardens and fruit orchards which embosom Damascus here ceased; but the Merj or irrigated plain, thickly populated, extends away to the "Meadow Lakes," some ten or twelve miles distant to the south-east. We skirted its northern margin, our road leading us along

the base of the sterile range of the Jebel Kalamûn.

Where the Aleppo road diverged, we passed a group of half-a-dozen well-mounted dervishes—not wild fanatic-looking specimens of religious asceticism and mendicancy, but sleek, well-to-do men, well dressed and armed, their long guns swinging at their backs, their active horses showing signs of blood, and, in fact, their whole appearance so mundane and prosperous, that had it not been for the drab felt conical hats, like inverted flower-pots, which betrayed their calling, I should have supposed they were prosperous merchants. We galloped over the short grass pasture-land where wild liquorice was growing in great abundance, to the village of Adra, where a large number of the Agidat Arabs were encamped and pasturing their flocks. They are a sedentary tribe of amiable herdsmen; and we sent over to the tents for a guide to lead us to the particular part of the Jebel Abu Ata which we wished to investigate. In an hour and a half after leaving Adra, under the guidance of the Arab, we crossed an ancient water-course leading to some extensive ruins which I had not time to visit, and reached a ruined *khan*. All cultivation had ceased, and we traversed a desert covered with flint, onyx, chalcedony, agate, and other pebbles which had been subjected to volcanic action. We scrambled over this difficult country till nightfall, along narrow wadies, up dry torrent-beds, and across serrated ridges. On one of these I perched myself while the sun was setting; and my friend was otherwise engaged, and revelled in a bath of colour, as the slanting rays seemed literally to burnish the barren hillsides, and their shadows fell encroachingly on the richly tinted desert, which changed its

hues as it receded, until its horizon was lost in the haze, out of which the burning heats of the day were fading. Below me, a little to the east, lay the village of Damer, the last permanently inhabited spot on this side of the Euphrates; beyond it stretched the illimitable desert; barely visible in a southerly direction was the water-line of the marshy lakes called Bahret el' Atebeh, in which the ancient rivers of Damascus, Abana and Pharpar, lose themselves. Beyond them, again, is the long volcanic range of Tulûl el Safa, a series of extinct craters, visited for the first time by Captain Burton. They form the centre of a notoriously wild and lawless district, which the Government has vainly attempted to reduce to order by the establishment of a military post near a spot called the Derb el Ghazawât, or Road of the Robberies, on account of its insecurity; but it is a road nobody travels, as it leads nowhere: there is nothing beyond but unexplored desert, excepting the three interesting ruins of El Diyura, which are situated on its nearest margin. Looking in a south-westerly direction, the eye wandered over the broad green Merj. An expanse of corn-field and pasture, and dotted with numerous villages and encampments, it is bounded by the low barren range of the Jebel-el-Aswad or Black Mountain, far behind which again, and a little more to the east, the lofty summits of the Jebel Druse, the home of half the Druse nation, bounded the prospect. To the west, the gardens of Damascus concealed all view of the glittering city which nestles in their shade, but contrasted wondrously in their soft colouring with the brilliant copper tints of the desert ranges by which they are surrounded. Behind all, majestic Hermon reared its snow-clad crests, glowing with

crimson light, and so completing a panorama unrivalled in the richness of its hues, and the striking contrast which its principal features presented.

The village of Damer, which lay almost at my feet, is the point at which the Arab express courier, after a nine days' and nights' journey across the desert, delivers up his mail. The wild Bedouin who performs this dangerous, solitary, and fatiguing journey, rarely enters the two centres of Eastern civilisation, between which he furnishes a means of communication. For him the fragrant gardens and well-stocked bazaars of Damascus have no attraction; or perhaps he fears that he might be seduced by them, and avoids the temptation. Be that as it may, he stops on the verge of the desert, at either end of his route, and swings on his lithe dromedary to and fro over its arid wastes, catching such snatches of rest as he may at the scattered oases and widely separated wells where he stops to refresh his camel. With the coppery sky scorching him by day, and the changeless blue above him at night; rarely knowing the shelter even of an Arab tent; carrying with him the dates and rice sufficient to last him for his journey; exposed to perils from thirst and sandstorms and predatory Arabs, to whom the fleet animal he rides is a sore temptation,—he is, without doubt, the most *bizarre* and exceptional postman in existence. One wonders whether he has really ever fathomed the mystery of his occupation, or found out why he should thus be kept constantly oscillating between the opposite margins of the desert with a bag; whether he knows what is in the bag, or, if he does, can form any conception why people in Damascus should care to know what people are doing in Baghdad, for he can never have experienced

the sensation of wanting either to receive or to send a letter. It is probably with a considerable feeling of scorn and contempt that he ministers to this morbid craving for imparting and receiving useless information. Then, again, what opportunities for profound reflection he enjoys! Rarely exchanging a word with his fellow-man, yet constantly battling with hidden dangers—always on the alert, and yet never varying the eternal monotony of sky and desert—the mystery of existence must present the problems which civilisation has failed to fathom, in an entirely new light to him for ever perched on the back of a dromedary. For all we know, he may have framed a theory of evolution depending on “environment,” by which, when the fittest is called upon to survive, he may remain the sole representative of the human race. Meanwhile the types of the highest state of civilisation, *blasés* with its discoveries, are driven to suicide, and find life monotonous because it is made up of “buttoning and unbuttoning;” but he who is never called upon to do either the one or the other, serenely leads the most monotonous existence of all. Yet no thought of self-destruction from *ennui* ever enters his mind as he jogs backwards and forwards over the dreary waste with the bag which he despises. Except possibly the gentlemen who prefer being stage-coachmen to any other existence, and daily leave the White Horse Cellar in all weathers throughout the London season, who is there who is likely to have attained to the calm elevation of his philosophy? And even these do not carry a post-bag.

It is sad to think that the day may not be far distant when the occupation of this interesting specimen of humanity will be gone; when the shrill scream of the loco-

motive, piercing the still air of night, will scare the jackals who now make it resound with their plaintive cries, and introduce the Baghdad postman to “the blessings of civilisation,” of which he has till now been deprived. Flying across the desert by the Euphrates Valley Railway, tightly wedged between a set of cardsharps in a third-class carriage, he may possibly look back with a smile of pity to his dromedary days; but it is a question whether he will be a better or a wiser man, especially if to relieve the monotony of the journey his companions initiate him into the mysteries of their vocation, or make him its victim. Let us hope that his instinct may teach him, if he would “evolve” into higher conditions, to telegraph for his dromedary to meet him at the next station, and to fly upon it to the uttermost recesses of his beloved desert, where, once more encompassed by the serene atmosphere of philosophical contemplation, he may reflect that, though he heard much among his fellow-passengers of the “blessings” and the “vices” of civilisation, there is still enough honesty left in Christendom to have refrained from the mockery of such a phrase as the “virtues of civilisation.” What relation may exist between its “vices” and its “blessings” is a subject which we recommend to the earnest and thoughtful consideration of the Baghdad postman.

We debated whether we should make for Damer as our night's quarters, or return in the dark to Adra. Had there been any certainty of meeting either of the Bagdad postmen, I should certainly have voted for the former alternative. I believe there are two of them—little, wizened, dried-up old men, who are supposed never to die. If a dead postboy used to be

a curiosity, it is easy to imagine that the Baghdad and Damascus postmen should be still more immortal; but as the chances were against our finding either of these unique individuals at Damer, we decided to return to Adra, and ultimately reached the house of the sheikh, tolerably tired after fourteen hours in the saddle, on very limited sustenance, and quite ready, therefore, for dinner. What was our dismay to find, as we rode into the courtyard of his comfortable dwelling—for he was a well-to-do sheikh—that he was giving an entertainment in celebration of his daughter's wedding! The yard was full of a dancing, yelling crowd of *invités*; the roofs were thronged with female spectators, who also squatted on their heels round the court, and applauded the dances in which they were not allowed to take part. These consisted in the men forming a circle, or sometimes a half-circle, and pressing against each other as closely as possible, so that the movement of the ring should be absolutely simultaneous, and then dancing round in measured and somewhat monotonous step. The music was composed of drums and pipes, and made a deafening and most discordant clamour. As the musicians changed the time, new steps were introduced, but none of them were graceful; and considering that it was ten o'clock at night, and we were famishing for want of food, we did not regard the performance with the interest and admiration that we should have shown under the pleasing influences of digestion.

At last the inevitable *pillaff* and *leben*, or sour milk, made their appearance, and we formed a rival attraction to the dancers, as we proceeded to dispose of our meal in the presence of the company. It was no use attempting

to go to sleep until the entertainment was at an end; and it was past midnight before we were enabled to stretch our weary limbs on the coverlets that had been spread on the floor, and seek repose in peace and quiet, except from fleas.

In the morning there arrived a fantastic dervish armed with a whip, and a boy dressed as a girl with castanets, and two musicians with a drum and a sort of banjo, and their performances soon attracted a crowd, though they were neither refined nor edifying. The boy was dressed and danced very much after the manner of a nautch girl in India, only rather "more so," while the dervish cracked his whip and acted the part of a somewhat immoral buffoon—so we were not tempted to linger longer than was absolutely necessary to swallow our morning coffee; and bidding adieu to the happy father of the bride, who had treated us with the greatest hospitality, we turned our faces homewards, and the same afternoon reached Damascus.

Mrs Burton, in her charming work, 'Inner Life in Syria,' has described so fully the fascination which clings to this patriarch among the cities of the earth, that she has left little to the traveller whose experiences have been limited to weeks instead of years. But even in that short time he becomes conscious of an aroma, if one may so express it, peculiar to itself,—a halo of mysticism, as well as of antiquity, which seems to pervade its fountained courts, its mazy bazaars, its fragrant groves, its rushing waters, and surrounding ruins. It is a concentration of what Kinglake calls "the splendour and the havoc of the East;" and if its fading splendour and present havoc fail to furnish the key to the mystery of its long existence, they at least invest it with an unrivalled

charm of association, carrying us back to the days when the traditions of religion are lost in obscurity, and arts were professed, and mysteries practised, which in these days would be deemed superstitious, but which in olden time formed the foundations upon which men's theological belief was built. As it has been at all times a centre of occult knowledge, I was anxious to learn its existing phase; and though my opportunities were too limited to enable me to make inquiries in the particular direction in which I had reason to believe facts of interest were to be discovered, I succeeded by means of the police in making the acquaintance of a personage of some celebrity in his way. This was a certain Sheikh Ruslan Aboutou, who lived in a quarter of Damascus known as the Meidan. It is a curious projection from the city, extending for a mile and a half in a southerly direction in a long narrow line like the handle of a frying-pan—supposing the pan to represent the city itself—and owes its shape and existence, doubtless, to the fact that by this road the Haj or Pilgrimage leaves Damascus for Mecca, and so shops, and dwellings, and storehouses have sprung up on each side of it, until they terminate at the Bawwabet Allah or God's gate. Here dwell a most strange assortment of characters. There are dervishes and the hangers of the Haj, Arabs from the desert, Druses from the Hauran, Mollahs, and corn merchants—for it is a great grain depot—tumble-down dwellings of vast dimensions and ghostly in their dilapidation, mosques and low-class *hammams* and cheap *khans*; while strings of camels arriving from distant oases, accompanied by wild-looking Bedouins, mingle with flocks of sheep driven by Kurd shepherds. On the right-hand side of the street, which is unusually broad, and about

half-way down it, was situated the house of the sheikh—an unpretentious building with a small courtyard, in which were two or three orange-trees, and overlooked by the flat roofs of the neighbouring houses. We arrived here one afternoon, a somewhat larger party than was wise, perhaps, considering the nature of the spectacle that was reserved for us; but the attraction proved too tempting for some ladies who were visiting Damascus to withstand, though it is not likely they will ever repeat the experiment. The sheikh received us at the door of his courtyard, which was already tolerably full of native spectators, and of persons who were to take part in the performances; while many veiled women, who had apparently got notice that the sheikh was going to exhibit his powers, crowded the surrounding roofs. We took our seats on a divan in an apartment, one side of which was open to the court, while from the others doors led into the house; from their slightly open chinks and crannies issued the murmur of women's voices. The sheikh himself was a tall handsome man of about fifty, with a short, well-trimmed, iron-grey beard, a bright intelligent eye, a somewhat hooked nose, and a mouth which, when he smiled, lighted up his face with a decidedly pleasing expression.

After the usual preliminary politeness of pipes, sherbet, and coffee, he went into an inner room, and reappeared with a bundle of iron skewers, very much resembling those used by cooks for trussing meat. Beckoning to a wild-looking dervish stripped to the waist, whose wandering eye had an evil look in it which the rest of his countenance did not belie—in fact it was only redeemed from being villanous by a sort of glare of insanity—he made him open his mouth, and proceeded with the

utmost coolness to pass a skewer from the inside through each cheek, so that the points could be seen plainly protruding. He then performed a like operation on a remarkably handsome youth of about sixteen, whom I afterwards found was his son, and whose large, clear, hazel eye was calmly fixed on mine while his cheeks were being pierced, nor did a line of his countenance indicate that he was conscious of the slightest pain. Not a drop of blood flowed in either case. The two victims stood before us with their mouths pressed back, and the projecting skewers showing the points through their cheeks with as much apparent comfort as if it was the normal condition of their being. Leaving them in this attitude, the sheikh again disappeared into his room. This time he returned with a small square box, drawing back the sliding lid of which he extracted a scorpion of unusual size, its vicious tail curling and striking its own back as it writhed between his fingers. This he handed to another dervish, clothed and looking more in his right mind than his skewered comrade, who instantly dropped the lively reptile into his mouth, and crunched it with great apparent gusto. As he was as large as an ordinary land crab, it was a big mouthful, and seemed to whip up into a sort of lather as he chewed it. His countenance as he went on munching was so impassive that I could not judge whether live scorpion is nice or not: probably it is an acquired taste. Another dervish joined in the repast, and disposed of a smaller one with equal equanimity.

I now suggested that we were satisfied in regard to the skewers, and that the company generally would feel more comfortable if they were extracted. It is decidedly unpleasant to have two men with their cheeks

trussed staring at you while others are eating live scorpions. Their mouths were so pressed back that they seemed to be grinning inanely; but I should think the effect of a real joke would have been disagreeable. I longed to try and make them laugh, to see whether it would not hurt them; but there is probably no such thing as a dervish with a sense of humour, and an Arabic joke was beyond me. The sheikh, too, would probably have been offended, for he went through the whole performance with the greatest solemnity, taking long, deep inspirations as he muttered incantations in which the name of Allah occurred frequently, before he touched the skewers; then with a dentist-like twitch he jerked them out. The points were bloodless, and the outside of the cheek showed only a slight induration, like that of a cicatrised wound; there was no redness or inflammation.

The sheikh now once more returned to his room and brought out a larger box, which he opened, and drew forth from it several snakes of all sizes. These began to wriggle about the floor in a disagreeable manner, with an overpowering attraction apparently for the legs of foreigners. However, the sheikh charmed them in the usual manner, and they soon all curled up submissively; then taking one about two feet long by the tail, he held it up in a manner so tempting that it proved irresistible to a tall, perfectly insane-looking dervish, who was afflicted with a sort of St Vitus's dance, and who, rushing forward out of the crowd, gave a loud yell, snatched the twisting snake out of the sheikh's hands with both of his, gave it a sudden violent jerk which snapped it in two, and plunged the bleeding and palpitating end into his mouth. This was a signal for a general

scramble: the half-naked dervish who had been skewered seized hold of the other end, and secured at least six inches all to himself. The men who had eaten the scorpions joined in voraciously, and in two minutes the entire animal had disappeared, and the human beings who had eaten it were wiping their bloody chops with much apparent relish. The tall St Vitus's dance man, indeed, seemed to become intoxicated with delight or some other emotion, and went into a sort of convulsion, from which he was only restored by the most intense effort on the part of the sheikh, who seized his head between his hands, pressing it violently as he took long breaths, and the veins swelled in his forehead with the concentration of his magnetic or other forces, as he repeated the formula of incantation, and finally restored his disciple, of whom he was evidently proud, to comparative calm. With the exception of the skewer affair, there was nothing very wonderful in all this; for, after all, the power of a man to make a beast of himself may be pushed to a very considerable length before it becomes inexplicable, so I was relieved to see preparations for experiments of a different nature.

A brazier of burning charcoal was brought in, and the charcoal fanned into a blaze. The sheikh then went through an invocation, and suddenly with his bare feet jumped upon it and stood there for nearly a minute, the lurid flame curling round them. The moment he got off, the serpent-eaters rushed forward and filled their mouths with the red-hot charcoal, which was again fanned, the smell of burning flesh becoming powerful and sickening as they crunched the glowing morsels. Live coals are possibly the antidote to snakes after you have eaten them; but the general

effect of all this strange diet was beginning to have a powerful influence upon the nerves of some of the lady spectators, who protested that they were unable to witness further horrors. A man now stepped forward, stripped to the waist, with a skin almost as fair as a European's. His face had none of that expression of fanatical insanity which characterised some of his fraternity, but was calm and somewhat commonplace. The sheikh reappeared armed with a skewer of larger dimensions than he had thrust through the cheeks of the first victims, to the end of which was attached a heavy iron ball, and proposed to run it through the man's throat from the front, bringing it out at the nape of his neck. At this there was a general scream of horror and dismay. In vain did the sheikh protest that the operation would be absolutely painless, and show us the indurated spots on the opposite sides of the man's neck through which the instrument was in the habit of passing, while the man himself smiled with a bland expression of disappointment at being deprived of a pleasure to which he was apparently looking forward. The repugnance of some of our party was not to be overcome, and the sheikh turned with an expression of contempt to make preparations for what was to follow. Pushing the same dervish's waist-cloth down an inch or two he revealed a row of cicatrices which made a semicircle extending round his body. He then drew a curved knife about eight inches long and nearly two broad from a sheath, and proposed to plunge it to the hilt in his stomach. It had a short wooden handle about four inches in length, and there was no possibility of the blade slipping back into the handle. But here again he was stopped by a cry of horror from the ladies. This

time the man himself earnestly joined his protestations to those of the sheikh; his credit seemed at stake, as there were women on the house-tops who began to chatter, and a general look of dissatisfaction on the part of the spectators in the courtyard. I examined both the scars and the knife. The former were thin, beautifully-healed incisions; the latter as sharp as a razor and of the finest steel. I am very sorry that veracity compels me to leave this most interesting experiment to the reader's imagination. The party had now made up their minds to leave the place, and seemed to have no other idea than a hurried escape from its precincts, so we made rather an ignominious exit, leaving the sheikh bewildered and somewhat indignant at our pusillanimous conduct.

I asked him, however, to pay me a visit on the following day, which he did, and I had a long and interesting conversation with him. He said he was the hereditary descendant of the founder of the Order of Bedawi, of which he was now the spiritual chief, and which numbered about 10,000 dervishes. These were scattered throughout Islam, and claimed adherents in all classes of society. He named one of high rank. The order was secret to a great extent, and there were those who openly professed to belong to it, as well as those who could exercise the special powers which attach to it without its being generally known. The founder of the order was a certain Sheikh Said Ahmed el Bedawi, who lived about five hundred years ago, was a Moslem of great reputation for sanctity, and is buried in the Church of the Crusaders at Tintah in Egypt. The Sheikh El Bedawi had been initiated into these mysteries, having naturally a wonderful faculty for acquiring them; but the present sheikh did not profess that

they had originated with him. He said that the power to perform these wonders dated back to an unknown period, and came from still further east; and that it was the same power which had been exercised by the sages, seers, and magicians of the Bible and other sacred books: that such powers were not confined to his order, though they exercised them in a more wonderful manner than the other miracle-working sects. These consisted of the Sukki, founded by the Sheikh Said Ibrahim; the Kilani, founded by the Sheikh Awal-abd-el-Kader; and the Rifai, founded by the Sheikh Ahmed el Rifai. He said that all these were good men and devout Moslems, and that the faculty which their disciples possessed depended upon the purity and morality of the lives which they led. It was not, however, necessary to be a Moslem in order to be a member of the order, though practically none but Moslems were members of it; but a belief in the Sheikh Bedawi as the source of such power was absolutely necessary so far as his sect was concerned. I then asked him in regard to the rites of initiation, and his own experience and training. He said that from his earliest infancy he had been educated by his father, as he was then educating his son, to exercise the powers which were hereditary in the family; that they were to be cultivated by much intense prayer and concentration of will. He then repeated the prayers and modes of invocation. I think he had some suspicion that I might become a neophyte, so earnest was he in his definition of the necessary process. Drawing long and deep breaths, he muttered, or rather whispered, in an attitude of the most intense internal concentration, the formulæ. Becoming more and more abstracted as he did so, he said, as he stopped suddenly, that were he

to go on a little longer he should fall into a trance; that when he was in a trance state he saw and conversed with the Sheikh el Bedawi, but it was never permitted to him to reveal what passed at these spiritual interviews; that those who wished to become disciples must learn this method of prayer and concentration; that they must also swear to the seven nomothetical precepts of Mohammedanism, which are indeed purely ethical, and apply to all religions—and that they must rigidly practise these virtues; that they must finally take the initiatory draught which imparted the healing power to the saliva, whereby incisions could be made and the flow of blood prevented by wetting the finger with the tongue and instantly pressing it on the wound. The draught was prepared by a cabalistic formula, which he wrote for me in my pocket-book, being inscribed on a piece of sugar, which was then melted in water, with the proper form of invocation. He declared that the water became thus charged with a special virtue, and imparted to the drinker healing powers, which he retained so long as he remained faithful to his vows. He admitted that these practices were not recognised by the Koran, and were even opposed in theory to the general teaching of Mohammedanism; but he said they were permitted for a special purpose, and this was to convince unbelievers that the powers claimed by seers and holy men of old were not mere fables, but were actual facts and the basis of the religious belief; that he was specially instructed never to exhibit his powers for the gratification of mere idle curiosity; and that if he attempted their manifestations from any but the highest motives, and in obedience to internal directions received from the Sheikh Bedawi, they would prove fatal but that when done in

an orderly manner, and from a religious motive, they caused no pain and were attended with no danger. He further said that the peculiar strength of the Bedawi lay in their power of dealing with fire; and that if I would stay in Damascus long enough he would show me men go into a fiery furnace, which he had in his house for the purpose, and come out as unscathed as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego after a similar experience.

I afterwards conversed with a very learned Moslem on the subject, who confirmed what the sheikh had said in regard to the innovation upon the pure precepts of his religion which such practices involved; but he remarked, somewhat slyly, "Where would Christianity be without the belief in the possibility of such powers? These men do not claim more than has been claimed at all times and in all religions, and they are necessary to prove to unbelievers that their creeds are not built upon fables; it is only natural that the Power which established them upon these supernatural foundations should keep them alive by manifestations of the same character. Why should such exhibitions be permitted to start a religion and not be continued to maintain its existence? The only reason why such powers die out of a religion which once possessed them is because the faith of its adherents has dwindled away. Hence Christianity can no longer exercise them, even though in your Bible it is said they should be retained; but Moslems, though no such promise is made to them, are able to prove to believers in the Koran that in the degree in which they practise its virtues can they manifest divine powers. Hence it is, that though I have nothing to do with such sects myself, I feel that they have their use, and I believe in the truth of their performances."

I met an English medical man afterwards who had lived all his life in the East, and who told me he had repeatedly seen both the operations which I had missed, and had had abundant opportunities of examining the piercing the throat with the skewer, and the plunging the knife into the stomach; and he was utterly unable to explain how it was done without causing death, much less the effusion of blood, or to account for it by any trick or sleight-of-hand operation. In fact the danger, as my Moslem friend observed, of refusing beyond a certain point to trust the evidences of one's own senses, is that we believe in what are termed miracles, and occurrences far more wonderful, upon the evidence of the senses of persons probably more easily deceived than ourselves, who lived ages ago. Thus, if in these days the curative power of saliva, the subduing of serpents, scorpions, and other "deadly things," the imperviousness to fire, and the healing of a sword-cut by a touch, are nothing more than a trick by which the most acute and intelligent observer may be deceived, the modern religious sceptic is fairly entitled to maintain that the same trick was known to fanatical religious impostors for the last two thousand years or more. It is evident, therefore, that there must be a limit to the scepticism of one's own senses and those of others, or one would be left without any ground for believing in anything.

Among other novelties which have been introduced into Damascus since the arrival there of Midhat Pasha as Governor-General of Syria, is an Arab theatre upon semi-civilised principles. I went there one night with his Highness, and was surprised at the modern aspect of the house. There was a ticket-seller at a *guichet*, and a house neatly arranged with seats, which were well

occupied by an exclusively male audience. In the front row were the seats reserved for the Governor-General's party; while the orchestra—consisting of a man who played an instrument like a guitar, another who played one like a zittern, another who played a native clarinet, another who sang, and another who drummed—were placed in a recess to the right of the stage. The curtain was inscribed with an Arabic motto, and rose and fell with irregular jerks; the scenes did not change; and the actors sang, or rather chanted, their parts. The play was the original story, which Verdi has adapted, and the plot of which he has considerably altered, of *Aidé*. The leading actor, who performed the part of the general, was a man of considerable dramatic power, clad in a coat of mail with a most fantastic helmet, which at the opening scene partly concealed his face, and whose lower extremities were clothed in thick white hose. He stalked about the stage unceasingly in his stocking-soles, swaying his body in a measured and not ungraceful manner, so as to keep time with the cadence of his voice, which was expressive of his varied emotions and by no means unmusical. The Egyptian king's daughter, who was in love with him, and the Abyssinian king's daughter, whom he makes a prisoner in war, and with whom he falls in love, thus nearly breaking the other one's heart, were both boys dressed as girls, who acted their parts with great feeling and cleverness, considering their youth. Indeed it was difficult to tell that they were not girls. They were picturesquely attired in oriental costumes, the one as a slave, the other as a king's daughter; but the other female attendants wore semi-Europeanised dresses which were by no means becoming. The king of

Egypt was a splendidly arrayed monarch, after the style of the conventional Sardanapalus; and he did the Eastern potentate to perfection. Indeed the whole performance was far more skilfully executed than might have been expected, though of acting in the strict sense of the word there was none: it was recitation, now plaintive, now impassioned, and, in the case of one character, jocose; but the perpetual motion of the players, who move rhythmically about the stage all the time, grows somewhat monotonous to the foreigner accustomed to more lively action. The audience, however, seemed thoroughly to enter into the spirit of the piece, and appreciated the jokes keenly. During the *entr'actes* the Arab band played the wild discordant music with which all Eastern travellers are familiar, and which is to be heard any day in the *cafés* and gardens of the city. The ballet was of the tamest description, and consisted of the most wearisome repetition of little steps. It was in every respect strictly proper, and was danced by the youths who represented the princess's ladies. The whole affair was an experiment which seems likely to succeed, and on the whole, was a pleasing if slightly dull performance.

There lies to the north-east of Damascus, and a little to the right of the road which leads from that city to Aleppo, a town rarely visited by the foreigner, and which possesses a special interest as being the only place left in the country where the old Syriac or Aramaic language is still spoken. It was known to the ancients as Magluda, and is called in these days Malula. Finding it could be reached in one day from Baalbec, by a road which was not generally known, I was glad to accept the invitation of our Vice-

consul, Mr Jago, to make the trip with him. We took the usual route to Baalbec, by way of the picturesque spring of Ain Fijeh, sleeping the first night at the lofty village of Bludan, which has been used by Damascus consuls as a retreat from the heat of the city, ever since Sir Richard Wood first made it a sanitarium. The peculiar characteristic and principal charm of the scenery which immediately surrounds Damascus consists in the vivid contrasts which it presents. At one moment one is riding over an arid desert, where the eye is wearied with the monotony of desolation, where the rocks scorch and sand blinds, and the sun glares fiercely down upon the panting wayfarer; and just when it has grown almost intolerable you reach the precipitous edge of the Sahara, and plunge in a few moments into a perfect bath of the brightest green, where clear waters are splashing, birds are singing, leaves are rustling, and the most delightful shade woos you to its cool recesses. The trees are brilliant with fruit-blossoms, and the whole atmosphere is fragrant with their delicious perfume. What wonder if you linger amid these tempting groves of apricots, peaches, figs, almonds, pomegranates, mulberries, walnuts, and tall poplars? The ground is too valuable to be allowed to produce a useless tree; those which are not fruit-bearing are almost exclusively poplars, used for building purposes. Even the villages are placed on the edge of the desert, so that people may not waste the ground which it is possible to irrigate by living on it. Little runnels of water trickle in every direction in these cool seductive shades, which, however, like other attractions to the senses, are not altogether without their danger, for the

sudden change from the heats of the desert to such enchanting but damp spots, is likely to produce a chill and its attendant fever,—a fact which it is difficult to realise as one plunges into the crystal fountain where it wells in a full torrent from its source—as at Ain Fijeh—as cold as ice, and foams away to give life and sustenance to the thousands who live upon the abundance produced by the lands which it waters. For the time, at all events, invigorated and refreshed, we scorn all sanitary considerations, and brace ourselves once more to meet the fatigue and the drowsiness which the desert sun produces after our relaxation. And so we jog wearily on to our night quarters, which invite us to a repose more grateful, if possible, than the last. Bludan is situated at an elevation of 5000 feet above the sea, so our night was most refreshingly cool.

On the following day we descended into the burning plain of the Buka'a, and were not sorry to see at last the tall trees and abundant vegetation which surrounds the grandest monument existing of a departed civilisation. The modern tourist, probably animated by a sentiment of spite at the consciousness of being such a pigmy as compared with the giants of art in those days, has taken to practising with a revolver at that more delicate tracery which is so far above his reach that he cannot destroy it with a hammer. Why he should of late have become consumed with a passion for putting fragments of Baalbec upon his mantelpiece when he gets home, it is difficult to conceive, for the mind of the Cook's tourist in these matters is unfathomable; but certain it is, that within the last three years there has been such wholesale destruction with pistols going on, that

most of those exquisite medallions, which a few years ago formed the chief glory of Baalbec, are completely effaced. The capitals of the Corinthian columns seem to make good targets for practice of this sort. You can aim at a particular fluted leaf, and have the pleasure of chipping the others all round until you bring down with a crash the particular piece of moulding you want. Then carved cornices are nice things to blaze away at, and the nose of an empress on a medallion forty feet above your head requires good shooting. I made inquiries on the spot as to the kind of people who were the best shots, and was informed that the American tourist carried all before him. This, however, I cannot speak of from personal knowledge; but I think the old practice of decorating the magnificent remains of a civilisation so superior to ours with one's name, was a more touching way of paying homage to them than battering them to pieces with firearms and carrying off fragments as the evidence of one's æsthetic tastes. It is needless to suggest that it would be very easy to get a piece of stone anywhere and label it "Baalbec;" and I venture to recommend that fragments from a neighbouring quarry should be carved and kept for this purpose, and sold to the tourist. It would be an additional source of revenue to the Turkish Government at a moment when its finances are sorely in need of assistance. On my return to Damascus I called the attention of the Vali to the destruction of Baalbec by the appliances of modern civilisation, at the hands of the race which has taken the reform of the Turkish empire so much to heart, and suggested that these "Baalbec atrocities" might be put an end to if a fee was

charged, and a guard put over the ruins. If the Christian tourist was first made to pay, and then watched, the "unspeakable Turk" might possibly keep him in some sort of order.

The modern town of Baalbec is a more than usually flourishing place. The Christians are getting all the land into their hands, and are gradually ousting the Moslems, who, having no European Powers to protect them, are generally throughout Turkey the most hardily used class of the population. In the immediate neighbourhood of Damascus, it is true, the case is reversed; but away from the seat of government the Mohammedan peasantry are decidedly, as a rule, less well off, and have more burdens to bear and oppression to endure than their Christian neighbours, in whose favour humanitarian sympathy has been so largely and so ignorantly enlisted. As, however, the popular demagogue, who expounds on this subject to the ordinary British voter from a platform, seems to understand it so much better than people who have lived and travelled in the country, it would be presumptuous in me to allude to it at any greater length.

About a mile and a half from Baalbec there is a beautiful and abundant spring, which is enclosed in a large basin, and is called Ras el Ain. It was the last inhabited spot we were to see for some hours, and with a heavy heart I turned my back upon the majestic ruin, whose most attractive features cannot long survive the attacks that are being made upon them. Our way led up a wild desolate wady, which reminded me of the Pass of Glencoe. We were travelling almost due east, and were breasting the western slopes of the Anti-Lebanon, which we were to cross by a pass at

an elevation of about 7000 feet above the level of the sea. Our day's march promised to be a long and fatiguing one, so we had started early, and pushed forward after our nimble guide with as much expedition as the stony track which did duty for a road would allow. After a scramble of an hour and a half we reached the Neby Kokab, where there was a stream which repeatedly lost itself and reappeared as it dashed down a gully, colouring the stones with its strong mineral properties, and where, in a wild spot, there was the tomb of a departed saint covered with relics. The steep hillsides here were not altogether barren, and in places the scenery was picturesque and even grand. *Arbor vitæ* grew abundantly, intermingled with a few oaks; while in the crevices of the rocks grew small, flowering, thorny shrubs and forget-me-nots, and the Syrian speedwell blended its blue tints with bright pink and purple flowers, whose name was unknown to me.

When at last we reached the summit, it was not to find ourselves on the crest of the ridge with a panoramic view beyond, as we expected, but on the edge of a rocky plateau, covered with broad patches of snow. We had frequently to dismount in order to cross these, as the crust was scarcely strong enough to bear our horses without the riders, and in places the drifts were deep. The path was merely nominal, and practically we found our own way between or across them, coming occasionally upon patches of green, the result of temporary pools and streams formed by the melting snow, and furnishing pasture to occasional flocks of sheep, tended by wild-looking shepherds, who bivouacked in these cold regions in the summer, and who stared at us in amazement, as specimens of an

unknown race. We only came across two or three of these herdsmen, and, with that exception, there were no signs of human life. The country was wild, craggy, and desolate in the extreme, but it had the immense merit of being cool; and we quite regretted finding ourselves, after an hour and a half of this description of travel, gradually descending on the other side over arid wastes, till we reached, in six hours from Baalbec, the squalid Metawali village of Zibdy, perched in a barren amphitheatre of rocks, perforated with caves, and of most uninviting appearance. The peculiar Mohammedan sect which inhabit it were notorious for their lawless character and thieving propensities, and we were not tempted to investigate it closely, as they looked ragged and scowling, but pushed on over the parched tableland beyond, under a blazing sun. There seemed no limit to the waste of desert upon which we had now entered, till suddenly, by one of those freaks of natural conformation which characterises the country, we came unexpectedly upon a ravine through which flowed a small stream, fringed by a margin of green cornfields. It was a cleft in the Sahara; and when we had dived down into it, watered our thirsty steeds, and scrambled up on the other side, we could look back to the mountain-range beyond and see no sign of verdure or cultivation. Towering behind us, and a little to the right of the pass by which we had traversed the Anti-Lebanon, were the peaks of Nabi Baruh and Tala-at-Musa, rising to a height of 7900 and 8700 feet respectively; while away to the north, and just peeping from behind the shoulder of the low sand-range upon which we stood, we could see the trees and orchards of the village of Yabrud faintly visible, in the afternoon haze.

Yabrud is the Jabruda of Ptolemy, and a bishop of Yabrud is mentioned as having been present at the Council of Nicæa. There is a Greek church here of great antiquity, which is said to have been built by the Empress Helena; and near the town is the ruined castle of Kasr Berdawil, a colonnade of which is half preserved. I was sorry to be unable to visit these interesting and little-known remains, but they do not lie far off one of the roads leading from Damascus to Aleppo, by which they are the most accessible. We crossed this road before reaching Malula, and from it looked down upon a rocky sandstone ridge, which had been cleft as if by a knife. Our guide pointed to it and said "Malula;" but beyond the walls of a monastery at the entrance to the gorge, we could see no sign of human habitation. The rugged conformation of the sides of the ruptured rock as seen from this point was strikingly picturesque. We descended towards the monastery, but turned sharply to the right just before reaching it, and found ourselves on the brink of a yawning gulf which opened at the base of the cliff. It seemed impossible to plunge into the chasm on horseback, so we dismounted and let our beasts find their own way. The well-worn steps in the rock proved that it had been a sort of staircase used by animals from time immemorial, and our sure-footed ponies did not hesitate to make the descent, while we scrambled down after them. We soon found ourselves in a sort of tunnel, the smooth rock rising to a height of 150 or 200 feet on each side, and closing in upon us to such an extent that we could only here and there see a strip of sky. The passage was so narrow that two loaded animals could not have passed; and side chasms and

crevices opened up into the rock, which was full of caves, while gigantic masses had fallen and got jammed in the huge cracks. Altogether it was the strangest and most weird entrance to the abode of man that I had ever seen; and my curiosity was excited to the highest pitch as we followed it for about a hundred yards, when we came to another flight of stone steps, up which we clambered, and then emerged upon a scene of singular quaintness and beauty. The town seemed hived upon the steep jagged sides of an amphitheatre of rocks; the houses were perched one above another, the flat roofs of those below forming the balconies and courts of those above, and sometimes the most easy mode of access from one to the other. We scrambled now up steep steps, now through tunnels partly of natural rock partly artificial, amid crags, caverns, and fissures, until we were told that we had arrived at the house of the sheikh, where a number of women were collected to receive us, and immediately began to bustle about and prepare a room for our reception.

We stabled our steeds in a cave, and went out to see the place before it was too dark, threading our way amid the labyrinthine alleys which wound up and down and in and out of the rocks and houses. Below us the gorge expanded into a richly-cultivated well-watered valley, where fruitful gardens supplied the town with their wealth of produce. We crossed the clear stream which gushed from the mountain-side amid the most luxuriant verdure and under overhanging foliage, and looking back could gain a better idea of the singular conformation by which we were surrounded. We found that a fissure in the range, corresponding to the one by which

we had dived into the town, cleft the rocks further to the north, thus making a craggy precipitous shoulder between the two, where the rocks and houses mingled in grotesque confusion. There was a sort of tunnel entrance by this chasm, similar to the one by which we had entered, and at its cavernous mouth was perched the orthodox Greek monastery of Mar Thekla. The one on the top of the rock at the point we had descended was the Greek Catholic monastery of Mar Serkis. The monks are celebrated for the excellent wine which they manufacture. All round were ancient rock-tombs, and the caves which in old time were occupied by hermits. In the days of Sir John Mandeville, who, as far as I know, is the only traveller who has ever described Malula, he found it a nest of hermits, who have long since died out; but from time immemorial it has been esteemed a place of great sanctity, and the monasteries to this day are much resorted to on certain religious festivals by pilgrims from all parts of Syria, and have in consequence become immensely wealthy. There are only two Moslem families in the town, which is otherwise exclusively Christian, of the orthodox or Greek Catholic persuasion. It is a curious thing that the women of these two Moslem families do not cover their faces, thus falling into the custom of the majority. The converse of this is to be seen in all Moslem towns where there are only a few Christian families, and where the Christian women adopt the Moslem custom of veiling themselves rather than appear singular in their dress. Malula contains nearly 2000 inhabitants, and the whole population, together with that of the two small neighbouring villages of Bakha and Jubadin, speak the ancient Syriac.

I listened with great interest to the musical sounds of this almost extinct tongue. It is probably very nearly identical with that spoken as the colloquial language of Palestine in the time of our Lord. It was the language in which He taught, and therefore possesses associations of a character to which no other tongue can lay claim. When we returned to our eyrie for the night, the women were gabbling in it with great volubility. They told us that most of the inhabitants could speak Arabic, but that they always used Syriac in their familiar intercourse, though it was not taught in the school. It is to be feared, therefore, that in a few years it will have taken its place in the list of dead languages. The sheikh himself was absent, but the door of the women's apartments opened upon the roof, which formed our dining-room, and exhibited a curious domestic scene, the children lying asleep, innocent of attire—and the females, whose relationship to the sheikh I could not exactly discover, pursuing their maternal and other avocations, entirely regardless of our presence. We lingered long on this interesting house-top, for the light of a brilliant moon shed its soft lustre over the wild scene, and the ghostly shadows of projecting crags and pinnacles melted into the gloom of the cracks and caverns. At last the glimmering of lamps and the sound of voices gradually died away into a sort of fantastic stillness, until we almost expected to see phantoms emerge, and a life in keeping with the weird surroundings take the place of that which had gone to rest.

Our way next morning led down the cultivated valley for a short distance, and then turned to the right through groves of pistachio-trees, the cultivation of the nut

being one of the principal industries of the place. The hillsides were also covered with vine and shumach trees. From the latter is made the yellow dye with which the leather of slippers or *papooshes* is coloured. For three hours we rode over a dreary but partially cultivated plain, keeping along the base of a low serrated range of sandstone, while, to the left, the burning plain stretched away to the Jebel Abul Ata, from the southern slopes of which I had already looked across the desert which extends to the Euphrates. The convent of Sednaya, perched on a crag, which is surrounded by the village of the same name, was a welcome sight, for it was to be our mid-day halt; and leaving our ponies at the foot of the long flight of stone steps that leads up the side of the rock to the convent, we obtained admittance from the nuns, and were shown by the lady superior into the apartment provided for the reception of guests. It was a delightful, airy room, commanding an extensive view in all directions; and from an adjoining roof we were indiscreet enough to try and peep into the nuns' quarters, which formed one side of a long, narrow courtyard. With the exception of two or three elderly females, our curiosity was not gratified—the young ones, if there were any, remaining in seclusion. The old lady who did the honours, and gave us some excellent wine and other comestibles, informed us that the convent contained forty nuns; that it was 1500 years old; and that, at certain times of the year, it was one of the most frequented resorts for pilgrims in Syria. This is due to the virtues of a miracle-working Madonna, whose picture is in the church, and who possesses the special faculty of increasing the population

in cases where a wife incurs the disgrace of having no offspring, or only daughters. Hence female devotees, desirous of making their lords happy, flock hither in great numbers, and, according to popular account, with great success, and the convent profits pecuniarily in consequence.

Traffic of this peculiar description is not confined in Syria to religious establishments, but the exploitation of feminine credulity is successfully carried on by individual miracle-mongers, who are supposed to possess the art of dealing with this mysterious problem of nature. A celebrated professor of it not long since accumulated a large fortune and acquired a great reputation by a very simple trick. Upon being applied to for assistance, he invariably prophesied the wished-for result, at the same time writing, in an obscure corner of the house, a prediction to the effect that the coming event would not be a son, but a daughter. If it turned out a son he said nothing of the written prediction, and passed for a great seer; if, on the other hand, a daughter arrived, he explained that he was well aware that such would be the case, but not wishing to hurt the feelings of the parents by an unnecessarily premature disappointment, he had contented himself with writing it secretly,—and now triumphantly revealed the written prophecy. In a Greek convent which I once visited in Moldavia, the comparative seclusion practised by the nuns of Sednaya did not exist; and I have no doubt that, had we been able to prolong our visit, their coyness here would have worn off. We were obliged, however, to content ourselves with an hour's rest, during which we entirely exhausted the lady superior's conversational resources.

On the east side of the rock on which the monastery is situated are some ancient rock-cut tombs, and further down on the slope is a square tower, evidently very ancient, probably Roman, and perhaps a tomb; it is known as *Mar Butrus er Rasûl*, or the Apostle Peter, and stands on a basement of three steps. It is 30 feet square and 26 feet high. Each wall consists of ten courses of finely-hewn stone. On the south side is a small aperture surrounded by a moulding, and closed with an iron door, which was locked. After some trouble we found the guardian, who let us in; but except a few poor modern pictures and some goods which had been put into it, apparently as a warehouse, it was empty. The roof was vaulted. As we passed through the somewhat squalid village we saw a wedding-party. The bride was a pretty girl, dressed in a very becoming jacket, trimmed with gold embroidery; her forehead and neck were hung with coins and jewellery, and her skirt was of bright scarlet. Her attendant maidens were similarly decorated and attired, and they formed a bright and picturesque group.

After an hour and a half of hot ride across the Sahara we suddenly dived into the refreshing pool of green verdure, on the edge of which is situated the village of Menin. A copious fountain of crystal water welled from the base of the cliff, with volume enough to be applied to mill purposes at its source, and to be subdivided into innumerable streamlets for irrigation. Under the shade of a grove of tall poplars all the women of the village were assembled, each with a spinning-wheel, chatting in picturesque groups by the side of the gurgling stream, and very much interfering with our bathing operations—for it

was impossible after our hot ride to resist a plunge into this delightful fountain. In the cliffs overhead were numerous rock-tombs and chambers; while the remains of what was probably once a temple, proved that from ancient times the attractions of the "source" of Menin had been appreciated. The valley widened as we rode down it. The temperature had sensibly changed for the better. In places the road passed between damp banks on which grew creepers, ferns, and mosses, while walnut and fruit trees lent a most grateful shade. We could scarcely realise the fact that half an hour before we had been on a desert without a patch of green visible, so potent is the magic touch of water. We luxuriated in these delightful shades for a couple of hours, and then once more the scene changed and we entered a savage gorge, along the rocky side of which the water was carried in an aqueduct. It is so narrow that we had to ride along the natural bed of the brook which carried off in winter the superfluous water. This romantic chasm, de-

void of all vegetation, separates the range of Jebel Kasiun from that of Jebel Kalamûn, and at its outlet we reach Berzäh. A Moslem legend makes this the birthplace of Abraham; while, according to another tradition, it is the point to which he penetrated when he pursued the captors of his brother Lot "unto Hobah which is on the left of Damascus," and succeeded in rescuing him. It does not seem to me in the least to answer the description; but the whole neighbourhood of Damascus is so replete with Biblical association, that the uncertainty in regard to detail can never deprive it of the peculiar interest which every salient feature must possess. As the evening shadows were lengthening we found ourselves once more on the verge of that vast expanse of green, in the centre of which the domes and minarets of the brilliant city were glittering in the setting sun; and spurring our willing steeds over the well-worn roads which converge to it as a common centre, we regained, in another hour, its comparative civilisation.

A DEADLY FEUD : A TALE FROM FRANCE.

BY RUDOLPH LINDAU.

AT sixty-five M. Isidore Tisson, Professor of History at the University of Montpellier, had still one great passion and one dear friend. He was a collector of rare books, and loved to be called a *bibliophile*. His friend's name was Colonel Casimir Coste.

M. Tisson had been a widower thirty years. His two daughters—who, after their mother's death, had been educated by an old aunt of a very religious turn of mind—were both married. One of them was settled at Nîmes, the other at Lunel. They were highly proper and highly respected ladies, who punctually performed all their duties without a murmur and without any pleasure. They paid their father frequent but short and formal visits, and never stopped a night in Montpellier, so that they in no way interfered with the quiet routine of the Professor's life.

Colonel Coste was a bachelor. Isidore Tisson and Casimir Coste, whose parents had been next-door neighbours, had begun to play together when they were only five years old. They had been to the same school, and had parted for the first time when they were seventeen. Tisson then went to the University of Toulouse, while Coste was sent to the military college of St Cyr. They did not meet again for forty years, and by that time they had completely forgotten each other. During this long interval M. Tisson had published several learned works, and had obtained the chair of Professor of History in his native town. Coste had fought the Bedouins in Algeria and the

Russians at Sebastopol, and had been obliged to retire from active service in consequence of a severe wound received at the storming of Fort Malakoff. He was a lieutenant-colonel, and an officer of the Legion of Honour. On leaving the hospital, the lonely, weary man returned to his native town, which he had not visited since the days of his youth. But he had often felt a strange longing to spend there in quiet the evening of his restless life, and now he hoped to do so.

He found Montpellier but little altered during the long years of his absence, and soon recognised in one of its narrow streets the very house in which his parents had lived and where he was born. It so chanced that a small apartment was to be let there. He hired it, furnished it simply, and established himself there at once. Behind the house was a large garden; and the Colonel, as a favoured tenant, obtained permission of the landlord to walk in it when he chose.

One evening in September, as Coste was passing up and down the gravel-walk in this garden, smoking his short pipe and thinking of Africa, the Crimea, and friends that were dead or lost, he heard himself called in a fashion that startled him—

“Casimir! Casimir!”

For nearly forty years no one had called him by that name. His superiors and his soldiers during that time had addressed him successively as lieutenant, captain, major, and colonel; his brother officers as Coste. He had lost his father and mother many years ago, and had

never had any brothers or sisters. He might wellnigh have forgotten that he had a Christian name, and now some one was calling him by it!

"Casimir! Casimir!"

He turned round and saw at a window of the first floor of the house next to his own a middle-aged gentleman, who was smiling and nodding to him in the most friendly manner. For a moment the Colonel remained motionless. Then with an oath, which it was his habit to utter whenever he wanted to express joy, anger, astonishment, or, in short, any sudden emotion, he called out in return—

"Isidore! Is it possible?"

A few minutes later the Professor was in the garden with his friend. He told him that he had returned that very morning from a trip which he had taken during the vacation, and had only just learned that a Colonel Coste, a native of Montpellier, had come to live next door.

"I at once thought it must be you, and would have called upon you to ascertain if my conjecture was correct, but I saw you in the garden and recognised you at once. You are not a bit altered."

The Colonel upon this laughed so loudly that the sparrows in the trees flew away in affright. "Well," he said, "I think that's just a *little* exaggeration. When I accompanied you to the diligence that took you to Toulouse you were a handsome, slender lad, with a soft down on your upper lip and a profusion of dark curly locks. Now you can boast of a very respectable circumference, and your dark hair has turned grey.—I was then a mere boy, with bright eyes, sound teeth, active legs, and a magnificent head of hair which I used to part sometimes on the right, sometimes on

the left side, not being sure which way was most becoming. Now I require spectacles to read, I munch like a rabbit because I have lost my back teeth, I walk lame because the Russians sent a bullet into my right leg, and I have so little hair left that the natural parting of it reaches nearly from one ear to another. Frankly, I cannot think I am very like the Casimir you knew."

"Still I recognised you at once. I would have known you among thousands, and would have said: 'That's my old friend and school-fellow, Casimir Coste.'"

"Well! and did I, I should like to know, hesitate as to your name?"

Then the two old gentlemen shook hands for the twentieth time, and laughed, while their eyes grew moist. Both talked at the same time, so that neither understood what the other was saying, until at last they came to regular questioning.

"Are you married?"

"No; and you?"

"I have been a widower many years."

"Children?"

"Two married daughters."

"Here, in Montpellier?"

"No; one at Lunel and one at Nîmes.—Are you going to live in Montpellier?"

"Of course; and you?"

"I am Professor at the University. But come; it is getting cold. Pascal, my old housekeeper, shall give us some supper. We will drink a bottle of rare wine and have a good chat together."

The Colonel made no objection, and the two friends sat together till a late hour in the Professor's snug drawing-room, telling each other the simple stories of their lives. They met again the next day, and the Colonel dined at the

Professor's. On taking leave he invited his old friend to be his guest the next day at the *table d'hôte*, where he was in the regular habit of taking his meals.

"I have never kept house," the Colonel said, "and I am too old to begin now. Wherever I have been stationed, the *table d'hôte* has been my table. I hope you will dine with me there to-morrow."

But M. Tisson objected. "We dine together," he said, "because we like one another's company, not because we want to do a polite thing. I have no fancy for restaurants and hotels. There are always strangers there, and one cannot talk comfortably and freely. Besides, to tell you the truth, Pascal has spoiled me. I am accustomed to her cooking, and hotel fare does not agree with me. Please withdraw your invitation. We do not stand on ceremony. Dine here again to-morrow and the day after—every day; you cannot do me a greater favour."

The Colonel consented to dine with his friend the next day.

Two weeks went by. The friends spent several hours together every day, and the bachelor had dined, maybe, a dozen times at the widower's house, when one day after dinner—old Pascal having left the room after serving coffee—Coste lit his pipe, cleared his throat, and made the following speech, for which he had been preparing himself for the last week—

"This is all very fine, Isidore, but things cannot go on in this way."

"What do you mean?"

"I have never lived better in my life than I do now with you, yet I do not like my board."

"Why not?"

"When I was a lieutenant I used to pay sixty francs a-month

for my dinner; when I became captain, it cost me eighty francs; since I have been a major, I have always reserved a hundred and fifty francs for that purpose. I must stick to these old habits to be comfortable; and if you cannot think of some way in which I can spend my money and have your company, I must give up dining with you."

"Excuse me, Coste, but really you are not speaking like a sensible man."

"But I have been thinking that I would be very sorry not to see your familiar face opposite me at dinner; and, somehow, I fancy that you too would miss me."

"You may take your oath of that."

"And therefore I want to make a rational proposal to you."

There was a long pause. The Colonel cleared his throat again.

"Well, go on," said the Professor, gently. "I see what you are driving at in that clever way; but let me tell you, I consider your proposal childish. Yes—be angry if you like—positively childish."

"Childish or not, I stick to it. And if you care as much for me as I do for you, if you are not afraid of having too much of me, you will accept it."

The Professor resisted for some time. He tried hard to persuade the Colonel to continue to be his guest; but the old soldier would not yield, so the Professor had to give up.

"You were ever obstinate and self-willed," he said, "whereas I was always the good-natured and sensible one of us two. Let it be as you wish: henceforward you shall pay for your board."

But this did not settle the question. Coste proposed to pay too much—Tisson asked for too little.

At last they agreed that Pascal, who for thirty years had been the Professor's housekeeper, should act as arbitrator. She was what is called in France a *maîtresse-femme*, and had a clear, sensible answer ready for any question that might be put to her; so after a short conference with her, it was settled that M. Tisson would not be a loser if the Colonel contributed 120 francs a-month. Thus this long discussion came at last to an end.

From that day a new and brighter life began for the two lonely old men, which made them forget their age, and which continued without interruption for many years. The Professor had little to do; the Colonel nothing at all. They spent many hours together every day: they walked arm in arm up and down the "Perou" and the "Esplanade"—the two principal promenades of Montpellier; they sat together in the Professor's library; or they went out together on the "Links," being passionately interested in an interminable game of "golf"—a pastime which is almost as much in honour at Montpellier, and at Montpellier alone of all French towns, as at St Andrews in Scotland. Their evenings were spent at the Club, where they found their regular whist-party. They became daily more and more dependent on each other,—as happens with old people from whom the rest of the world is gradually withdrawing, who love few people, and are loved by few, and whose interest centres in a narrow circle. Very soon they became indispensable to each other. Tisson became uneasy if Coste was five minutes late for dinner, and the Colonel had every morning a confidential talk with Pascaline to inquire if the "master" had passed a good night, if his cough had been troublesome, and if he had enjoyed his break-

fast. He was a regular attendant at the Professor's lectures. His venerable head, his attentive, earnest, mild countenance, soon became known to the whole University. The young students took a liking to the quiet old gentleman, and made room for him respectfully when he entered the lecture-room. And he greeted them kindly: "Good morning, gentlemen." When the lecture was over, the Colonel liked to have a talk with the Professor—often asking for explanation of some obscure point. The Professor would offer it with a pleasant smile, and with an air of innocent, gentle pride. Now and then the Colonel would quote some Latin sentence, in order to show that he, too, was not deficient in classical knowledge: "*Alea jacta est*," "*Dulce est pro patria mori*," "*In vino veritas*," and other sayings of that sort. On such occasions the learned Professor was wont to look a little embarrassed, though he smiled approvingly, and he would change the conversation. But when the old soldier spoke of his campaigns, the Professor, in his turn, would listen for hours, and put encouraging questions so as to induce the narrator to continue his story.

The friendship of these two old gentlemen had become proverbial. The Professor's daughters were perhaps the only beings who did not look upon it favourably. They complained of the fearful profanity of the Colonel's speech, and of his poisoning the whole house with that horrible short pipe of his, which he smoked indiscriminately in every room of the house. "But papa approves of everything the Colonel does," they said. "Let us hope that he will have no cause to repent some day."

This remark was not quite correct, however. Their father was far from

approving entirely the views and the mode of life of his friend. The Professor was an earnest Catholic, and, like most members of the upper classes in the South, a stanch Legitimist. Coste, on the other hand, possessed an inexhaustible stock of rather scandalous stories, in which priests, monks, and nuns were not always mentioned with the respect that Tisson thought due to them. In politics he was a Liberal, inclining towards Republicanism. Tisson would sometimes call Coste "Charras," and the Colonel would retort by "Polignac." Their discussions, which were long and frequent, were generally brought to a close by one of them reminding the other that the time for a rubber or a game of golf was come. Then the excited countenance of his opponent would at once assume a calm expression; both would take their hats and sticks, and walk to the Club or to the "Links," chatting cheerfully by the way, as if nothing had ever disturbed the perfect harmony of their intercourse.

The terrible year — *l'année terrible*—of 1870-1871 put an end to these discussions between the two friends. Both were true patriots, and in their grief for France they forgot all differences of opinion. Both blamed the Emperor and the Empress, the Ministers and the generals, with the same severity. They believed with the same implicit confidence all the stories which were told of the heroism of the French soldiers and the barbarity of the Germans. They felt the same indignation towards Russia, which did not hide its sympathy for the enemy; the same disdain for the English, "that nation of shopkeepers," who had forgotten Sebastopol; the same contempt for those "ungrateful" Italians, who abandoned their old

ally in her distress; and they shed tears together when the news of Sedan reached Montpellier.

About this time a peculiar kind of feverish, nervous excitement had taken possession of the whole French nation. Our two friends did not escape the contagion. The cheerful equanimity of former years was gone. They never touched a card, and dust gathered on their golf clubs and balls, lying unheeded in the hall. They read the papers with passionate eagerness; they made strategical plans, and discussed them as earnestly as if armies had been at their command; they hoped against hope; they believed that the fortune of war would take another turn; they never despaired, for it seemed to them simply impossible that France, their proud, mighty, beautiful country, could succumb in a war with any other nation—and they felt almost crushed when the dreadful truth at last dawned upon them, when they knew that the power of France was broken, and they saw her, humbled to the dust, at the mercy of the conqueror.

Coste and Tisson spent day after day together, silent and mournful, feeling that their common sorrow had drawn them even more closely together than the peaceful happiness of former years. But as, in spite of their advanced age, they had preserved a good deal of that liveliness and elasticity of mind which characterises the inhabitants of southern France, they shook off after a time that dull oppressive sense of gloom. Nervous irritability and great bitterness of feeling remained, however, and showed themselves in frequent and violent explosions of anger against the supposed authors of the great national misfortune.

Then the papers brought the news

that a Revolution had broken out in Paris, and that the Communists had seized the reins of government. At first the two friends heard these reports almost with indifference. The wounds inflicted by the foreign foe were still so fresh that they were unable, so to speak, to feel any new pain. But soon the civil war compelled their attention. It became the principal theme of conversation. The interest in the struggle for the possession of Paris, where Frenchmen fought against Frenchmen, soon absorbed every other feeling.

It was on the 3d of June 1871. The day had been hot and sultry. Dark thunderclouds had gathered, and threatened a storm at every moment. The air was heavy.

The Professor was pacing up and down the dining-room in an agitated manner, waiting for the Colonel, to sit down to dinner. At last Coste arrived half an hour after the usual time. He held some half-opened crumpled newspapers in his hand, and, on entering, threw them on the table. He looked pale and disturbed.

"I have waited for the papers from Paris," he said; "read—it is horrible, incredible!"

Tisson took up the papers and looked at their contents. Pascal had served the soup; the steaming plates stood before the two old men, but neither thought of touching them.

The papers reported the horrors committed by the Communists: the destruction of the Tuileries, the Hotel de Ville, the Ministry of Finance, the Cour des Comptes, &c. . . . They related the massacre of the hostages, the furious fighting in the streets, and lastly, the slaughter among the "enemies of society" by the avenging Versailles troops.

Tisson looked up and said, with

a long-drawn breath of relief, "God be praised! The good cause has triumphed!"

"It might well have triumphed with more humanity," retorted Coste, sullenly.

"I hope you are not going to defend the Commune?" continued Tisson, in an almost threatening tone.

"No," replied Coste, turning pale and speaking in a tremulous voice, "I am not going to do that. But I do think that the troops might have shown less bloodthirsty cruelty. Fifty thousand! . . . Think, Tisson, what that means. . . . Fifty thousand human lives have been sacrificed! . . . Fifty-thousand! It is dreadful! . . . They have shown no mercy to women and children; they have been killing as if they were destroying wild beasts!"

"They have done right!" cried Tisson. "Brave men who have fought against wild beasts—a murderous, infamous crew, the scum of humanity, robbers, murderers, incendiaries!"

"Tisson, Tisson, think of what you are saying! You are speaking of Frenchmen, of our countrymen, our brothers."

"Your brothers, if you please—not mine, thank God! I have nothing in common with thieves and murderers."

"Nor have I."

"You have—since you dare to defend them."

"Dare? . . . You must be out of your senses, Tisson, to speak to me in this way."

"No, I am perfectly in my senses, and I tell you calmly and deliberately that it is a shame—a burning shame—that you should dare to say a word in defence of the Commune,—yes, you ought to be ashamed of yourself!"

"Recall that word, Tisson ! recall it, or by . . . !"

"You ought to be ashamed, I say. Shame ! shame !"

The Colonel rose, pale as death, with flaming eyes. He struck the table with his clenched fist, so that the plates and glasses rattled, and he swore with a fearful oath that he would never sit down at that table or put his foot in that house again until Tisson begged his pardon and retracted what he had said.

"And I declare," replied the Professor, who of a sudden had become strangely calm, but was as pale and trembling as his wretched old friend—"I declare, without the use of any blasphemous language, that the words you require me to say shall never pass my lips."

Then the Colonel went to the door, took his hat and stick, and in a moment, without another word or look, was gone. Tisson heard his heavy, halting step upon the stair. The house-door was opened and shut again ; then all was still—the stillness of death.

For three whole days the Colonel and the Professor lived on their passionate wrath. Then their anger cooled, and both began to understand what they had lost. The isolation consequent on their estrangement became unbearable. Coste dared not leave his rooms for fear of meeting his old friend ; the Professor crept stealthily out of his house when obliged to go to his lecture,—and the two old hearts longed for reconciliation. Yet it could not be. They thought over again and again that parting scene, and remembered every word and every look.

"He should not have insulted me at his own table, in his own house," said the Colonel ; and he felt that he could not, in honour, break the oath he had sworn.

"He was entirely in the wrong," thought the Professor. "How could he defend the greatest rascals and criminals the world has ever seen ?" And he remembered with a shudder that he had solemnly vowed never to pronounce the words which alone could induce the Colonel to return to the house as a friend.

One morning old Pascal came to the Colonel. "What have you done to my master, sir ?" she asked, with tears in her eyes. "He does not eat, he does not sleep. He sits all day long in his study without opening a book or writing a line. He will see nobody, he speaks to nobody—he will die. What have you done to him, sir ? Do help my poor master !"

The Colonel had always treated the faithful old servant with kind familiarity, and he was quite ready to discuss the matter with her. "You see, Pascal," he said, in conclusion, "I have sworn upon my honour never to re-enter his house until he has acknowledged himself in the wrong—and I cannot break my word."

"It is a wicked thing to take an oath when in anger," said the old woman. "Ask our vicar, sir ; ask the bishop himself. They will release you from your vow."

"I have given my word. No human being can help that. I must keep it." Tears stood in the dim eyes of the old soldier. He looked miserably sad, but he spoke with so much determination that Pascal felt she must give up all hope of reconciling the two friends.

Soon after this the Professor's daughters came to pay their customary visit to their father. Pascal told them what had happened. They disliked the Colonel, whose manners they considered coarse ; and they merely observed that no doubt their father would soon find

out that the loss he deplored now, was, in fact, a gain. They were about to say as much to their father, but he stopped them angrily, telling them with flashing eyes to keep silent on that subject or to leave the house.

For a whole month there was no change in the relations between Tisson and Coste. Their quarrel had become the subject of talk in all Montpellier, but no one felt inclined to play the part of peacemaker between the two old men.

At the end of that time the Professor went away on his usual holiday trip. For the last ten years Coste had been his companion on these occasions. They had visited together Paris, the Pyrenées, Auvergne, and Switzerland. They had enjoyed themselves everywhere. But now the Professor started alone. He thought of going first to Paris—and then? He had not settled where. He wanted to leave Montpellier. He could not bear to remain there any longer.

The Colonel stood at his window, hidden by the curtain, when the cab stopped at his neighbour's door. He felt a heavy load on his chest, and his eyes burned in their sockets when he saw the Professor leave the house with a heavy step and enter the carriage. When it had driven off, Coste hid his face in his bony hands and wept bitterly; but he experienced a sort of relief in the thought that Tisson was no longer in his immediate neighbourhood. He walked up and down his garden sadly and thoughtfully, feeling himself free and unobserved. A kind of peace stole over him; and one day, when he got up in the morning, he wrote the following letter:—

“DEAR TISSON,—I have made up

my mind to leave Montpellier and to return to Algiers, where my old regiment is stationed, and where I have still a few comrades who will be company for me. They cannot make up for what I have lost; but, at any rate, I shall not feel as utterly lonely as I do here. Before I leave, never to return, I would like to meet you once more as in the good old times. I therefore beg you will write to me, on receipt of this, to appoint a place of meeting in Paris. We will, as in bygone days, have a stroll through the big town, we will dine together in the evening, and then bid each other ‘good night,’ as we have done for the last ten years. On the morrow I will leave Paris. You will then be able to think of me as of an absent friend from whom you have parted in peace and goodwill. My anger lasted but a few days. Since I have become cool and collected I feel the same old friendship for you which I shall ever feel, even if you reject my proposal.—Believe me, dear Tisson, your faithful friend,

“CASIMIR COSTE.”

Old Pascal gave him her master's address. The Professor was staying at a small hotel in the Rue du Helder. The landlord was from Montpellier, and Coste and Tisson had lodged there on several occasions.

The second day after the despatch of this letter the Colonel received one from Paris. He at once recognised the writing of his friend, and tore open the envelope with a trembling hand. The letter consisted of a few hurried and almost illegible lines:—

“I have sworn never to pronounce the words which you require before re-entering my house; but I may tell you how hard it has

been for me to keep my vow. Forgive me the pain my anger has caused you. I, too, have suffered much, and I remain, till we are parted by death, your faithful and attached friend,

"ISIDORE TISSON."

The letter fell from the Colonel's hands, and all seemed dark for a moment. When he had recovered a little he went to Pascal. She had received no tidings of her master. Coste then telegraphed to the landlord in Paris begging to be informed of the health of the Professor. In a few hours the answer came back,—Professor Tisson had died suddenly. He had been found dead in his bed on the morning of the preceding day. The funeral was to take place on the morrow. The daughters of the Professor had been communicated with.

Coste started that same evening for Paris, and arrived there a few hours after the funeral. He saw the daughters and sons-in-law of his friend at the hotel. They were in deep mourning, but appeared to bear their loss with great equanimity. They seemed surprised at the Colonel's troubled countenance when he entered their room unannounced in his dusty travelling dress, and they answered his inquiries briefly and precisely. Their father had had a stroke. He had gone to bed in his usual health at ten o'clock, and had been found dead the next morning. The doctor thought he must have died about eleven. At any rate, he had been dead some hours when found; and he had died, they hoped, without pain.

Coste went the next morning to visit the grave. On his return to the hotel he was informed that "the family from the south" had left Paris after ordering a "pretty"

tombstone to be placed on the Professor's grave.

The landlord, M. Doucet, a great talker, who had known Coste for many years, and was particularly fond of having a chat with him under ordinary circumstances, became unusually silent and reserved when the Colonel asked him for the particulars of his friend's death. He was evidently concealing the truth, and Coste determined to find it out. He bribed the waiter, who at first held back; but when the Colonel promised faithfully not to betray him, the man related in a nervous, frightened manner all he knew.

M. Tisson had arrived five days ago. He went out little, dined alone in his own room, and spoke to no one in the house. On Friday morning he wrote several letters, which he posted himself. About ten o'clock he ordered some tea, and told the waiter that he was going to bed, adding that he did not wish to be disturbed before the next morning.

"When I knocked at his door on Saturday morning at nine, to give him a letter that had arrived from Montpellier, I received no answer, and finding the door was locked on the inside I became alarmed. I called M. Doucet, who sent at once for the police, and in presence of the 'Commissaire' the door was opened. M. Doucet, the 'Commissaire,' and a doctor who had come with him, were the only people who went into the room. My master told me to stand at the door and not to let any one go in. I had to wait a long while. When those three came out of the room, M. Doucet was as pale as a ghost. He took me aside and said: 'I trust that you, an old servant of the house, will not talk. It would damage the reputation of the hotel.' I promised to be silent,

and up to this moment I have not opened my lips about it to a single soul, nor will I do so again. But you were an old friend of M. Tisson's, and ought to know the truth. A little later the doctor returned with an assistant. They locked themselves into the room where the dead body was lying, and remained there about an hour. Late at night, so as not to alarm the other visitors, the coffin was brought quietly into the house. The next morning M. Tisson's relations arrived. They asked to see the body, and I followed them into the little drawing-room where it was laid out. The features of the dead man were not distorted; they were yellow as wax. Round the neck was placed a broad white cravat, which reached up almost to the ears. I felt a cold shudder when I saw it. I told M. Doucet in a whisper that it looked very horrible. He made me a sign to be silent, and seemed very agitated. It's my opinion, sir, that M. Tisson laid violent hands upon himself and——"

Coste turned deadly pale, staggered back, and sank into a chair. The waiter sprinkled some cold water on his face and gave him something to drink. When he had recovered from the shock, the man entreated him once more not to betray him, and then quietly left the room.

A few days later Colonel Coste returned to Montpellier, but only to superintend the removal of his simple furniture and belongings to Paris, where he settled in a remote part of the town at no great distance from the cemetery where Tisson was buried. He lived there for a year in sadness and solitude. Then his health began to fail, and at the end of a few weeks he was confined to his bed. The doctor advised him to take a Sister of Charity as a sick-

nurse, as he had no relation or friend to take care of him. Coste assented to everything. The nurse came, and performed her duties carefully. She was a strong young woman, with a smooth calm face, fair, with rosy cheeks—a face that looked as if it belonged to one pure in body and mind. She nursed the lonely helpless old man carefully, unwearingly, without anxiety and without hope, as she had nursed for years many other sick and dying people.

"He is getting weaker and weaker," she said one day to the doctor. "He does not know me now."

The Colonel lay on his bed, with half-closed eyes, breathing feebly. The doctor felt the pulse, forehead, and heart of his patient, and said, while slowly drawing on his gloves—

"I do not think he will hold out through the day. I will look in again to-night; in the meantime you may go on with the medicine I prescribed yesterday."

The sister nodded, and when the doctor was gone, took up some needlework, with which she busied herself whenever the patient did not require her attendance.

The day passed quietly, without any perceptible change in the state of the dying man. When it grew dark the sister left the room noiselessly to fetch a lighted lamp. The door had remained ajar. From the next room she thought she heard the patient speak, and hurried back to his bedside. He had raised himself from his pillows, and his face, which she could not well distinguish in the dim twilight, seemed to her to have grown younger. His eyes, which during the whole day had remained half closed, were now wide open, and looked kindly and peacefully around. That indescribably sweet smile with which so many weary ones greet the ap-

proach of peace - bringing death lighted up his countenance.

"It is getting dark," he whispered. "Wait for me, Isidore; we will go home together."

He fell back on the pillow. His breathing became slower—slower and fainter—then ceased.

The sister remained for a few moments perfectly still. She then left the room, and soon returned with the lighted lamp. She raised it above the head of the dead man, so that the bright light fell upon his pale, emaciated, and calm features. She looked at him attentively, without tenderness, without sorrow, or indeed any visible sign of emotion, turned quietly away, and after placing the lamp on the table, returned to the bed to close the eyes of the departed. In the same methodical way she smoothed the pillow and placed the quiet head carefully and gently upon it, drew the sheet up to the chin of the dead man, and placed a crucifix in

the cold hands, after having folded them above the counterpane. Then she lighted two candles, and placed one at the head and the other at the foot of the bed. Lastly, she took a small bottle and poured the holy water which it contained into a saucer, already prepared for the purpose, which stood by the bedside. When she had attended to all this without hurry, as without hesitation, she looked around as if to see if anything else remained to be done. Her calm searching glance surveyed with the same serious composure the corpse, the tapers, the crucifix, the saucer with the holy water; and when she had satisfied herself that nothing had been omitted, and that everything was in perfect order, she drew from her pocket a little, well-worn, black book, opened it with unerring hand at an accustomed place, knelt down, made the sign of the cross, and her silent, moving lips recited the prayers for the dead.

I O N.

A GREEK tragedy rarely stood alone. If it was not actually a member of a trilogy, it was generally one of a group of closely-related plays; so that its principal characters either came before the audience as persons already known to them, or else as the descendants of familiar ancestors. Even the scanty remains which are all that we possess of the Hellenic drama abundantly illustrate this; and but a small number of its surviving treasures are wholly disconnected from the rest. "*Ion*," a very charming play by Euripides, is, however, one of these. No character in it revisits us in any extant Greek drama; nor do any of these rehearse the eventful story of *Erechtheus*, the father of its heroine. That heroine, *Cræusa*, is, as we shall hope to show, an interesting personage on her own account; but, as the last survivor of her famous house, her sorrows must have doubly touched an Attic audience, who had assisted with awe and reverence at many representations of the strange fate of *Erechtheus* and his children. A modern writer has kindly undertaken to supply the deficiency for us, and to enable us to behold the mother of *Ion*, environed by the sacred light of her parents' and sister's self-sacrifice: the author of "*Atalanta in Calydon*" has written us an "*Erechtheus*."

It is a play which may claim from us a few moments' attention, not only on account of its story, but as indicating the extent and depth of the classical revival which is going on around us. The Hellenic aspirations of the last genera-

tion were amply satisfied by Talfourd's "*Ion*." Now, if we compare that beautiful play with Mr Swinburne's "*Erechtheus*," we shall be struck by many points of difference. First, as to the language: Talfourd's tragedy is written in pure English readily intelligible to the ordinary reader; Mr Swinburne's in a Greek-English, which it requires some scholarship to appreciate. Then as to the personages: Talfourd's characters are the more lifelike, but have here and there something of a too modern tone; while Swinburne's are faultlessly correct in attitude and grouping, but unreal and ghost-like. And as to the structure of the drama; Talfourd very sensibly deserts the Greek for the English stage-tradition, and enacts his catastrophe in the presence of his spectators; while both the first and second catastrophe of the "*Erechtheus*" are narrated, strictly according to precedent, by the time-honoured lips of our old friend the Messenger. There are no lyric passages in Talfourd's "*Ion*," and no chorus; whereas these are by far the strongest points in Mr Swinburne's play, the ringing resonance of whose chorus charms the ear, even when it fails to convey very distinct notions to the mind; and who can surely defend his occasional practice of "taking care of the sounds and letting the sense take care of itself" by most venerable antique examples. Finally, Talfourd's "*Ion*" was acted before, and applauded by, an ordinary London audience. If we were requested to collect one for Swinburne's "*Erechtheus*," we should have our fears lest, however

Ion. Eur. Opera.

Ion: A Tragedy. By T. N. Talfourd.

Erechtheus. By A. C. Swinburne.

carefully culled from masters of public schools, University Dons, and devoted partisans of the classic revival, our chosen band of spectators might disgrace us, and themselves, by yawns.

Perhaps we may be allowed to illustrate our meaning by a quotation or two from each play,—the rather as Talfourd's "Ion" is at present, very undeservedly, out of print,—and Swinburne's "Erechtheus," for sufficient cause, is unlikely to be perused at length by many of our readers.

To begin, then, with the elder play. Judge Talfourd borrowed little from Euripides but the name and the first idea of his hero,—a foundling (although of royal parentage) nurtured in the temple of Apollo, whose priest, Medon, discovered the infant in his sacred grove. Now the young Ion's real father is Adrastus, tyrant of Argos, whose unknown son is selected by lot to kill him, in order to appease the wrath of the gods, who are wasting Argos with a plague, and who have declared by an oracle that Adrastus and his line must perish. The discovery of Ion's real parentage comes just in time to save him from incurring the guilt of parricide. Another hand gives the fatal blow to Adrastus, who dies, repenting of the crimes into which he was driven by his own early wrongs, and bidding his son reign better than he has done himself. His long-warped nature is healed by the reconciling touch of Death, and his affecting converse with his new-found son begins thus:—

ION.

How is it now with thee ?

ADRASTUS.

Well, very well :—

Avenging Fate hath spent its utmost force
Against me ; and I gaze upon my son
With the sweet certainty that nought can
part us

Till all is quiet here. How like a dream
Seems the succession of my regal pomps
Since I embraced thy helplessness ! To me
The interval hath been a weary one :
How hath it passed with thee ?

So soon as his sire is dead, Ion bethinks him how he is to keep his promise to him, complicated as it is by the oath which he took "to slay Adrastus and his son"—i.e. (as he now finds), himself. Despite his love for Clemanthe, the priest's beautiful daughter, and the attractive prospect of a beneficent reign with her for the partner of its joys, he resolves to give up the life which he has promised, and which the gods have claimed, for the benefit of Argos. The finest and most pathetic scene in the play is that in which Ion, still keeping his fatal secret, hints to Clemanthe that the crown about to be placed on his brow will separate them. The maiden has asked whether she may not sit embroidering his great deeds, cheered in her labours by an occasional word or smile from him ! Many as may be his royal cares, yet surely love may be suffered to brighten them.

ION.

Not for me ;
My pomp must be most lonesome, far
removed
From that sweet fellowship of humankind
The slave rejoices in : my solemn robes
Shall wrap me as a panoply of ice,
And the attendants who may throng
around me
Shall want the flatteries which may
basely harm
The sceptral thing they circle.* Dark
and cold

* This fine passage contains an anachronism—if that matters. Its speaker thinks of the grave and the worms. A Greek would have been looking forward to the funeral pile and its result,—

"A handful of white dust, shut in an urn of brass."

Stretches the path which, when I wear
the crown,
I needs must enter ;—the great gods forbid
That thou shouldst follow in it !

CLEMANTHE.

O unkind !
And shall we never see each other ?

ION (*after a pause*).

Yes,—
I have asked that dreadful question of
the hills
That look eternal ; of the flowing streams
That lucid flow for ever ; of the stars,
Amid whose fields of azure my raised
spirit
Hath trod in glory : all were dumb ; but
now,
While I thus gaze upon thy living face,
I feel the love that kindles through its
beauty
Can never wholly perish. We shall meet
Again, Clemanthe.

—Talfourd's "Ion."

So hoping, the new king of Argos hastens to fulfil the promise that he made to his unhappy father. He dismisses the mercenary soldiers who upheld the tyranny of Adrastus ; and binds the citizens by a solemn oath to establish an equal republic in Argos so soon as his own life shall end. Having done this, he turns to accomplish his oath to the gods, makes his last prayer for his country's welfare before the altar, and then stabs himself there. His last moments are cheered by joyful news. The plague ceases ; and Ion dies, knowing that his sacrifice has been accepted.

No special training, no unusual

acquaintance with antiquity, is required in order to appreciate the beauty of a poem like this. We can scarcely say the same of Mr Swinburne's very clever restoration of the lost "Erechtheus" of the Greek stage. Its reader must think in Greek while listening to English, and even, while doing so, cannot feel the strife between the son of the earth and the son of the sea to be a reality like that betwixt "The Seven against Thebes" and its defenders ; or the death of the maiden Chthonia (generously as she yields her life for her country) to be a source of true anguish like that of Polyxena or of Iphigenia. Still there are real echoes of very grand strains in the specimen which we are about to present to our readers.* It is part of the scene in which the daughter of Erechtheus goes forth to the altar, where she is to give her life for Athens—the price of her father's victory over the Thracian Eumolpus.

CHTHONIA.

People, old men of my city, lordly wise
and hoar of head,
I, a spouseless bride, and crownless but
with garlands of the dead,
From the fruitful light turn silent to my
dark, unchilded bed.

Day to day makes answer, first to last,
and life to death ; but I
Born for death's sake, die for life's sake,
if indeed this be to die,
This my doom that seals me deathless till
the springs of time run dry.

O city, O glory of Athens, O crown of my
father's land, farewell !

* A few lines in the adieux of Chthonia and her mother Praxithea, are all but a translation from the farewell of Polyxena and Hecuba, in that play of Euripides which bears the last of these two names.

CHTHONIA.

On earth
I see now but the shadow of mine end,
And this last light of all for me in heaven.

PRAXITHEA.

Farewell I bid thee ; so bid thou not me,
Lest the gods hear and mock us.

CHORUS.

For welfare is given her of thee.

CHTHONIA.

O goddess, be good to thy people, that in them dominion and freedom may dwell.

CHORUS.

Turn from us the strengths of the sea.

CHTHONIA.

Let glory's and theirs be one name in the mouths of all nations made glad with the sun.

CHORUS.

For the cloud is blown back with thy breath.

CHTHONIA.

With the long last love of mine eyes I salute thee, O land where my days are now done.

CHORUS.

But her life shall be born of thy death.

CHTHONIA.

I lift up mine eyes from the skirts of the shadow,
From the border of death to the limits of light;
O streams and rivers of mountain and meadow,
That hallow the last of my sight.

O crown on the world's head lying
Too high for its waters to drown,
Take yet this one word of me dying,

O city, O crown.

Though land-wind and sea-wind, with mouths that blow slaughter,
Should gird them to battle against thee again,

New-born of the blood of a maiden thy daughter,
The rage of their breath shall be vain.

Be blest and beloved as I love thee
Of all that shall draw from thee breath;
Be thy life as the sun's is above thee;
I go to my death.

Should this sample of Mr Swinburne's lyric dialogue excite the wish to see how he succeeds in the yet more ambitious effort of the Chorus, we are ready to gratify it by presenting our readers with part of the fine one, early on in the play, which bewails the hard fate of Clithonia's elder sister Oreith-

via, torn (like Persephone from Enna) from the flowery bank of the Ilissus, to be the spouse of Boreas, ruler of the north wind. Its roar is as of a mighty tempest, with ominous lulls between each wild gust of wind, and before the final crash. Readers, undesirous of such fierce music, have a ready pretext for skipping in the "Excusez-moi, monsieur; je n'entends pas le grec," of Molière's "Henriette," which it is quite open to them to employ.

CHORUS.

1st Strophe.

Out of the north wind grief came forth,
And the shining of a sword out of the sea
Yea, of old the first-blown blast blew the prelude of this last

The blast of his trumpet upon Rhodope.
Out of the north skies full of his cloud,
With the clamour of his storms as of a crowd

At the wheels of a great king, crying aloud,

At the axle of a strong king's car
That has girded on the girdle of war—
With hands that lightened the skies in sunder,

And feet whose fall was followed of thunder,

A god, a great god strange of name,
With horse-yokefleeter-hoofed than flame,
To the mountain-bed of a maiden came,
Oreithya, the bride mis-mated,
Wofully wed in a snow-strewn bed,
With a bridegroom that kisses the bride's mouth dead;

Without garland, without glory, without song,

As a fawn by night on the hills belated,
Given over for a spoil unto the strong.

1st Antistrophe.

2d Strophe.

With a leap of his limbs as a lion's, a cry
from his lips as of thunder,
In a storm of amorous godhead filled with fire,

From the height of the heaven that was rent with the roar of his coming in sunder,

Sprang the strong god on the spoil of his desire.

And the pines of the hills were as green reeds shattered,

And their branches as buds of the soft spring scattered,

And the west wind and east, and the
 sound of the south,
 Fell dumb at the blast of the north wind's
 mouth,
 At the cry of his coming out of heaven.
 And the wild beasts quailed in the rifts
 and hollows
 Where bound, nor clarion of huntsman,
 follows ;
 And the depths of the sea were aghast
 and whitened,
 And the crowns of their waves were as
 flame that lightened,
 And the heart of the floods thereof was
 riven.

2d Antistrophe.

But she knew not him coming for terror,
 she felt not her wrong that he
 wrought her,
 When her locks as leaves were shed be-
 fore his breath ;
 And she heard not for terror his prayer,
 though the cry was a god's that be-
 sought her,
 Blown from lips that strew the world-
 wide sea with death.
 For the heart was molten within her to
 hear,
 And her knees beneath her were loosened
 for fear,
 And her blood fast bound as a frost-
 bound water,
 And the soft new bloom of the green
 earth's daughter
 Wind-wasted as blossom of a tree ;
 As the wild god rapt her from earth's
 breast lifted,
 On the strength of the stream of his
 dark breath drifted,
 From the bosom of earth as a bride from
 the mother,
 With storm for bridesman and wreck for
 brother,
 As a cloud that he sheds upon the sea.
 —Swinburne's "Erechtheus."*

With an apology for tarrying
 thus long among modern antiques,

we hasten to guide the steps of
 those inclined to follow us to the
 veritable frieze of ancient sculpture,
 for which we began by claiming
 their attention. Not that our sur-
 vey of Mr Swinburne's well-model-
 led group is lost time as a prepara-
 tion for an examination of the "Ion"
 of Euripides. Its heroine, Cræusa,
 is, as we have already said, the
 daughter of the very Erechtheus who
 gives its name to the modern play.
 The thunderbolt which slew him in
 the moment of victory, just after he
 had smitten down Eumolpus, leader
 of the adverse host, the narration
 of which forms the catastrophe of
 Mr Swinburne's tragedy, left Cræusa
 the orphan heiress of his kingdom,
 in place of her elder sisters—theslain
 Procris, the immolated Chthonia,
 and the vanished Oreithyia. It
 was a head consecrated by all these
 sorrows that an Athenian spectator
 felt prepared to revere as he awaited
 the entrance on the scene of the
 mother of the eponymous founder
 of his race: the fate of the Erech-
 theid princess whom Boreas wooed
 so roughly, prepared him to hear
 that Cræusa, too, had for her mis-
 fortune attracted the admiring gaze
 of a god, and to learn that from
 thenceforth her destiny, whether
 for good or for ill, could not be
 entirely as the destiny of other
 women. Our hasty glance at Mr
 Swinburne's drama has therefore
 been a rapid passage through the
 antechamber which leads to the hall

* English readers of this play will learn from it much about the Greek drama. They will learn still more by patiently reading, and comparing, the two most recent versions of the "Agamemnon" of Æschylus—those of Mr Browning and of Lord Carnarvon. That of the first named will show them what that famous tragedy is like—in the same way that an ugly dried flower can show a naturalist what were some of the distinctive features of the lovely blossom which it once was ; but in Lord Carnarvon's translation they will enjoy many of the fair hues, and much of the perfume, of the flower itself. In other words, Mr Browning's work is a facsimile of the "Agamemnon," very cleverly executed, but with all the beauty left out ; Lord Carnarvon's a faithful and scholarly transcript of his great original, made happily with due regard to the differing genius of the English language, and to that principle of compensation, without attention to which it is impossible to produce a satisfactory version of a poem.

that contains "the Mother and the Son" of Euripides; and as their anxieties and sorrows unfold themselves to us, it will help us to remember that this tale of simple domestic interest has a past full of demigods and heroes behind it, a vast historic future before it; and that, in dramatising the fortunes of Ion and Cræusa, Euripides was paying a compliment at once to his great patron, the city of Athens, and to the widespread Ionian race.

The scene of the play is laid in front of Apollo's temple at Delphi. It is the son who is first introduced to us,—one of the most charming pictures ever painted of early youth. The boy steps forward, with a matin-greeting to Phœbus, to busy himself in the faithful performance of his task for the god's honour; his artless lyrics letting us into the secret of his own orphan state—a foundling by the temple-door, who has found, from the pity of the god, a mercy denied him by his human parents. Yet there is something noble about the boy which seems to promise highly concerning his origin, should we ever discover it; just as the wise answers of Joash, in still tenderer years, in the "Athalie" of Racine, suit well with his royal descent, and prepare for his elevation to the throne of his ancestors.

It is thus that Euripides introduces us to his youthful hero. It is early morning: first the great temple of Apollo stands calm in the clear light of dawn, while the peaks of Parnassus above it flush rose in the first beams of the sun; then, as those beams fall on the temple-door, there stands there a figure with a quiver on his shoulder, like a statue of the youthful Apollo in beauty, whose semi-childish features accord well with the early freshness of the scene—whose words, child-like and melodious, find the following lyri-

cal utterance, while he performs the various tasks which they indicate:—

ION.

Now, his four coursers and gold chariot
guiding,
The sun down to earth sends his light;
From his fires in the air see the stars flee
for hiding

To dear, holy night:

See the trackless peaks of Parnassus up-
holding

Day's great disc to our mortal sight;
See mists of incense the temple-roof fold-
ing,

Steamed from censers bright.

The Delphic priestess her sacred chair
Has taken, in song to Greeks to declare
The word by Apollo sent.

Now, servants of Phœbus, your steps be
bent

Down to swift Castalia's silver wave;
Thence fetch pure dews and the temple
lave,

And with heed speak no word save of
good intent,

To men who the god's responses crave.

Mine the task, as from childhood it still
has been,

The porch with the laurel bough to
sweep,

And hang there its chaplets of glossy
green;

To sprinkle with water the holy floor;

And with bow and arrows good watch to
keep,

Chasing the birds from the temple-door
Lest they make the statues unclean.

Motherless, fatherless, thus do I
Serve this fane, my nurse from mine
infancy.

Strophe.

Tender branch of laurel-tree,
Fairest on the ground that grows,
Come and sweep that temple's floor,
Which great Phœbus' splendour shows:
Tree in beauty, waving free
From immortal garden-bed,
Where the holy dews are shed,
Fount that flowing evermore
Has this myrtle's tresses fed,
In my hand the pavement sweeping;
While I with the swift-winged sun
Still my course of service run,
Daily here my station keeping,

Pæan, hail! hail, mightiest!

I thy name adore:

Leto's son be blest,

Now and evermore.

Antistrophe.

This I count of labours best,
Phœbus, here to wait on thee,
Honouring thy prophetic seat;
Glorious is my toil to me:
Slave to the immortals blest,
Not to meaner mortals, I
Weariness in work defy,
For my labour's praise is sweet,
And my father, Phœbus high.
I his praises still am singing
Who has fostered me from birth;
Ever would I chant his worth
Through his temple-courts loud ringing:

Pæan, hail! hail, mightiest!

I thy name adore:

Leto's son be blest,

Now and evermore.

Now my earliest task is done,
Rest thee, laurel bough;
From their golden vase must run

Waters now,

Which the fount of Castaly

Scatters free;

Bounteous shed

From holy bed.

Ever thus to Phœbus may

I my dutious service pay,

Nor cease till life be fled.

Lo! the birds, their nests forsaking

On Parnassus' height,

Here their way are taking.

Shun, I bid you, in your flight

Lofty cornice, gold-decked room.

Zeus' own herald, thou whose claw

To weaker birds gives law,

Thee my bow

Can lay low:

If thou heed'st not, fear thy doom.

'Tis a swan his way now steering

Towards the temple-door.

Thy red-glancing foot uprearing,

Flee my shafts before;

Lest thy song to Phœbus' lyre

Save thee not from death, retire,

With thy white wings seek the Delian
wave,

Lest, my charge unheeding,

Thou thy sweet song bleeding

Raise in death, with none to save.

Lo! what other birds appear?

Swallow! wouldst thou build a nest

For thy callow young ones' rest

'Neath this cornice? Ah! but fear,

Nor my bowstring disobey.

Where Alpheus' waters play

Haste thy progeny to rear,

Or within the Isthmian dells;

Only harm not Phœbus' cells;

Do not wrong his statues dear.—

Much I shrink to hurt you, birds,

Who of gods the fateful words

Bring to mortal ear;

But 'tis Phœbus that I serve,

From his will I ne'er must swerve.

In strong contrast to this picture of life in its spring-time, is seen advancing a stately lady, fair still in her matured beauty like an embodiment of late summer; but with marks of sorrow on her lofty brow, and a wistful eye that seems looking into distance for something which it cannot find.

It is Crœusa, daughter and heiress of Erechtheus, King of Athens, newly arrived at Delphi with her husband Xuthus. Their union has now lasted many years, and is still childless. They have come to Delphi to consult Apollo as to whether the gods will yet give them an heir. Such are the causes, so far as are known to her attendants, of Crœusa's sad looks. They trust that she may leave the shrine with better hopes and a more cheerful countenance; and so they survey the stately columns and fine proportions of the temple with even more than the artistic admiration which eyes, trained amidst the architectural magnificence of Athens (antedated, of course, by Euripides), might be expected to bestow. Dividing themselves into two companies, they sing the praises of the fine sculptures which adorn it, recognising amongst them, with especial pleasure, the form of their patron goddess, Pallas; and receive information from the young acolyte, Ion, concerning the hidden glories of the inner shrine, which it is not lawful for them to enter.

But meantime it is far otherwise with their mistress. She turns pale at the sight of Apollo's temple, as if stung by some agonising memory; and stands weeping amid the smiling faces that surround her. Her answer to the boy, who, struck by the grace and dignity of the unknown lady, ventures to ask the cause of her tears, points to some hidden and mysterious source for them. He

says (after expressing his admiration for the form which guarantees her noble birth),—

Yet this amazes me: you close your eyes,
And wet your high-born cheek with
streaming tears,
At sight of Phœbus' holy oracle.
Oh, woman! whence this anguish in thy
mind?

When all men else, beholding the god's
cave,
Rejoice, thine eye alone o'erflows with
tears.

Crœusa. Stranger! thou well mayst wonder that I weep.

But I, soon as Apollo's house I saw,
Went measuring o'er in mind a memory
old,
Dwelling at home, in thought, though
present here.

Alas, for woman's sorrows! for the rash
deeds

Of gods! Ah, whither can we flee for
justice

When 'tis our lords' injustice that de-
stroys us!

Ion. What strange and secret thing
awakes thy wrath?

Cr. Nothing: my bolt is shot. Hence-
forth my lips

Are silent upon this; heed it no more.

Yet another hint of her secret trouble soon escapes her. The youth, who seems well versed in the fortunes of Athens, asks her many things concerning them, after she has disclosed her name to him. The lady answers willingly; till at one question, seemingly of all the least important, she starts as if a serpent bit her.

Ion. Is there not there a district Macræ named?

Cr. Why askst thou that? what memory stirrest thou?

Ion. By Pythius honoured in his radiant light?

Cr. Dishonouring honoured. Would I ne'er had seen it!

Ion. What? Hatest thou the place our god loves best?

Cr. Nay; but I know of shame within those caves.

There is also an artfully-veiled equivocation in Crœusa's reply to Ion's subsequent inquiry, when, dis-

cussing about her present errand to Delphi, he says, "Thou hast then never been a mother," and she answers, "Phœbus knows that I am childless." So, too, it is rather the eye of a woman who had known a mother's feelings by experience, if but the experience of one short hour, than that of one to whom those feelings were a matter of conjecture only, which Crœusa fixes on the beautiful boy before her, when she asks him his name, that she may call the mother of so fair a son blessed. "I bear no name save the god's," * replies the youth. "I know not my father, nor yet who bore me; never did I suck the breast; the priestess of Phœbus, my adopted mother, reared me; the god has fed and clothed me from my earliest infancy, and I have no marks by which to discover my unknown parents." "Sorrowful myself, I find sorrows elsewhere," says Crœusa: "thine unknown mother is indeed miserable. And what she has endured another woman has likewise suffered,—one known to me, and for whose sake I have preceded my husband to the oracle, to put there a question in private on her account." And then, though not to her young listener, yet to the discerning spectator, Crœusa discloses the secret of her sadness and her half-hidden indignation against the god. This hapless friend of hers who, wedded forcibly by Phœbus, bore him a son in secret, exposed the child, and, finding it not when she returned to seek it, feared it had been devoured by wild animals, is of course herself. The lost child would now be about of Ion's age; and she wishes to learn from the god whether he is still alive. "Alas!" says Ion, "this case seems like my own." But he dares not do Crœusa's bidding, and insult

* Ion is a name given to him in the course of the play. He is nameless at its commencement.

the god in his own house by an inquiry concerning a misdeed of his own. At this refusal, reasonable as it is, the lady's wrath arises; not, however, against the young doorkeeper of the temple, but against the god, "unjust now as heretofore, who neither protected his own son then, nor yet will now let the hapless mother know where to find him alive, or where to raise a tomb to him dead." Her words painfully affect her young listener. By herself they are soon forgotten in the joy caused by her husband's approach with a good report of his own preliminary inquiry at the cave of Trophonius. He has heard these glad tidings there—that he and his wife will not return childless as they came; so he goes in with good heart to consult the great oracle itself, bidding Cræusa offer prayers meantime for a favourable result at all the various altars. But Ion, who remains behind, has overheard Cræusa mutter as she left him that now perchance the god may make up for his former offences; though not even then (accepted as she must a god's atonement) could she wholly feel his friend. And this smothered indignation cannot seem unjust to him after what she has narrated. His faith in the perfect goodness of his honoured master has been rudely shaken. And as he turns once more to ply his task with the golden pitcher, he cannot refrain from apostrophising the god, with more sincerity than reverence, thus:—

Yet let me bid thee, Phœbus, wed no
more
Virgins by force, betray them, and
neglect
Their babes cast out in secrecy to die.
Do not; but, being mighty, follow virtue,
For when men sin, they are the gods
who punish.
How can it stand with justice, then, for
you,
Our lawgivers, yourselves to be law-
breakers?

Cræusa's maidens now occupy the scene, to aid their mistress with their prayers. Their choric song begins with a supplication to the two virgin goddesses, Athené and Artemis, to procure her a favourable response, and to bless the race of Erechtheus with children. And then, in language which reminds us of that of a well-known psalm, they thus declare their sense of the greatness of the blessing which they implore for her:—

Stay of vast prosperity
None is found so firm to rest
As a house by children blest;
When, a light to father's eye,
Strong young sons his old hall crown,
Fit his riches to receive,
Fit ancestral wealth to give
To their children's children down:
In the evil day a ward,
In the gladsome morn a joy,
They when foes the land des roy
Stand its ever-watchful guard.
Better far than royal treasure
In the secret chamber piled
Is the wealth of one dear child:
Where can childless age find pleasure?

Proportionate to the strength of their desire to see their mistress made a joyful mother is the dismay of these faithful handmaids when Xuthus issues forth from Apollo's temple with a cheerful countenance, and salutes the young Ion, who meets him on its threshold, as his son; saying that the oracle has declared that the first person he should meet as he went out would stand to him in that relation. For his joy must, as they think, prove Cræusa's sorrow. A step-son, born to her husband years before his marriage with her, is a sorry substitute for the child which they had trusted that the gods were about to bestow on both. Nor does the young Ion view the new prospect opened to him with unmixed satisfaction. At first he is incredulous, and thinks that Xuthus has lost his wits. Afterwards, when assured of the tenor of the oracle, his first inquiries are, by a beautiful

instinct, for the unknown mother, about whom Xuthus can tell him nothing; and he cries—

O mother! shall I ever see thee too?
Now, whosoe'er thou art, more than of
old
I long to gaze on thee; but thou per-
chance
Art dead, and never shall mine eyes
behold thee!

Nor does he like the idea of going to live at Athens, to be despised there for his doubtful birth, and looked upon as an alien intruder by the citizens; and to be at the same time a standing grievance to their childless princess—a step-son whom she might come both to fear and hate. Rather than expose himself to the annoyance and the risk which he foresees, he asks his new-found father to let him remain at Delphi. To this Xuthus replies by declaring his own equal fear of grieving a wife whom he loves and honours, by flaunting before her a happiness in which she has no share. Rather will he take Ion home with him, as a stranger friend, in the hope that Cræusa herself may learn to love him, and be won in course of years to adopt him as her heir. Meantime, he carries him off with him to a feast, in which he means to celebrate his birth as well as his recovery; enjoining silence under severe penalties on his wife's attendants. But their wrath at seeing him happy while such misfortune is befalling their lady, and the strong suspicion of collusion, and of an oracle unfairly obtained to suit his own purpose, which their lyric song expresses after his departure, give small hope of their obedience to the injunctions of Xuthus.

Ere long Cræusa is seen returning from her visits to the altars. She is not alone. An aged slave, the guardian of her father's infancy and of her own, has joined her. Him she bids share the joy which she hopes

the oracle has in store for her; or, if misfortune after all awaits her, it is, she says, sweet at so sad a moment to look into the eye of a friend—much more of an adopted father, as the old man is to her. Her hopeful glance is quenched, as it falls on the sad and anxious countenances of her maidens. Their doleful exclamations prepare her for the worst; and, though they protest that it is dangerous for them to speak, yet the “faithful handmaids of her loom and shuttle” (as she calls them) cannot find it in their hearts to keep back the fatal knowledge which their mistress imperatively requires from them. Out it comes, with a wild burst of grief from their leader; who professes herself ready, rather than deceive her lady, to die a double death. “Never, my mistress,” she exclaims, “shalt thou take a babe of thine own in thine arms, or press it to thy breast.” Overcome by this sudden downfall of her high hopes, Cræusa cries out for death. Then comes the second, and yet more staggering, blow,—the tale of the blessing denied to herself being granted to her husband; of his being proclaimed the father of the youth who had so powerfully attracted Cræusa's attention on her first arrival at Delphi; and the news that they are even now celebrating by a feast a joy in which she has neither part nor lot. Her old tutor cries out that she is betrayed; that her husband, ungrateful for the honour which their union has bestowed on him, has beguiled her to Delphi, and laid an artful plot in order to introduce into her house the son of some strange woman, who, nameless though he be, will quickly make himself master there. Nay! he, together with Cræusa's faithless spouse, will plot her death. Had she not better be beforehand with them; and slay them sooner than let them slay her? Before these

terrible suggestions, pressed alike by her early and her later sorrow, the poor lady's mind seems on the point of giving way. She bursts into wild invectives against the god; whose original offence against her, so long concealed, is now being forced on to her lips by the pressure of this new injury. The old guardian of her childhood, who never dreamed that his dear adopted daughter kept any secret from him, stands amazed, as, in her helpless wretchedness, the words escape her, opening what a handmaid fitly calls a store-house of woes, which no eye can look on tearless. It is thus that she boldly makes her complaint against great Apollo himself, at his own temple-door:—

Cræusa.

Oh heart! my lips how can I seal?
Yet how my nuptials hid reveal?
How fling away the bonds of shame?
What hindrance in my path is left?
What yet from me can duty claim?
Has not my husband's hand betrayed me?
Of home, of child am I bereft;
Those hopes are fled that silent made
me;

While I to grasp them tried,
Content to hide
My marriage,—my sad childbirth to conceal.

But now, by Jove's star-spangled seat I swear,

And by the goddess of our rock's high crest,

By Lake Tritonis' holy shore,
I will no more

Those nuptials cloak, but free my breast
From weight of secret hard to bear.

Mine eyes are running down with tears,
Ill counsel my grieved spirit fears
Of men and gods, whom I will prove
Traitors to love,

Thankless for all my goodness in past years.

Sounder of the seven-voiced strings,
Making rustic folds around
Hymns the Muses love resound,
Breathing life from lifeless thing,—
Leto's son! before this light
I my charge against thee bring.
Thou, thy hair all golden-gleaming,
Cam'st on me, whilst gathering
Crocus flow'rets (gold too gleaming),
I wove from them garlands bright.

Woe is me! my child has perished,

Snatched by ravening birds away,
Mine and thine; by both uncherished,
Wretched; yet thou singest gay
To the lyre thy pæan lay.

Hear then, Leto's son divine,
Utterer of the oracle

Where the golden tripods shine
At earth's centre round thy cell,—

Hear in turn these words of mine:

Oh! bad immortal spouse!

Thou, having earned of old no grace
Of him my husband now, dost place
A stranger's child within my house;
Whereas thy son and mine perished
unknown;

By fierce birds torn,

And stripped forlorn

Of swaddling-bands by me about him
thrown.

Thou hast shamed Delos' laurel-grove,
And that high palm with fair leaves
crested,

Propped against which once Leto rested,
That day she bore thee unto Jove.

The old tutor stands aghast: he demands explanations. Cræusa reminds him of the cave of Macræ in the Cecropian rock. "There," she says, "sorely against my will, I contracted my unhappy marriage with Phœbus. There, all alone, I bore him a son; and there I left him abandoned to the beasts and birds."

Tutor. Died he? Did bad Apollo give
no aid?

Cræusa. No aid: my child was reared
in Hades' house.

Tu. Did none but thou know of thy
child's exposure?

Cr. Two others only: Grief and Secrecy.

Tu. How couldst thou bear to leave it
in that cave?

Cr. Ah! how indeed! with piteous
words of wailing.

Tu. Woe for thy fatal rashness! yet
I blame

The god still more.

Cr. Ah! if thou couldst
have seen

How the babe stretched his little arms
to me.

Tu. But with what hope didst thou
cast out thy child?

Cr. The god I trusted his own son
to save.

Tu. Alas! what tempests shatter thy
great house!

Cr. Why veil thy head, old man, and
take to weeping!

Tu. Because I see thy misery and thy father's.

Cr. All mortal things are such : nought stays the same.

But this sorrowful tenderness soon gives place to a fiercer mood. The old man bids his beloved princess revenge the wrongs that she has suffered, and suggests to her wild schemes of retaliation. "Burn the god's temple." "I dare not," says Cræusa. "Try something more practicable then; slay thy husband." "The memory of our wedded days, happy till now, restrains me," is her reply. "If not that, then kill this son, thy new-found foe."

Unhappily this last piece of advice finds favour. Cræusa and her foolish old friend have worked themselves up to the belief that she must either slay or be slain; and therefore they do not scruple to plot the luckless Ion's death at the very banquet where his poor father is now feasting him. A deadly poison, the Gorgon's blood, given by Pallas to Cræusa's grandsire, is to be dropped into his wine-cup by the tutor's own hand; who undertakes his wicked errand with a calm confidence in its righteous nature which nerves his aged frame to youthful deeds. To his mind the strict rules of piety are for peaceful and prosperous times: when at war with foes, law must needs be set aside.

But while Cræusa, in her wild passion, sees the old man grasp the deadly phial and depart, without misgiving, the audience tremble. To them the horrible nature of the imminent catastrophe is but too apparent: the death of a son by the contrivance of his own mother.* For that Ion is in truth Cræusa's lost child is to them an open secret. The horror of the dark thunder-cloud thus so suddenly drawn over

the clear blue sky under which the drama opened, is deepened by the first strains of the choric ode, sung by Cræusa's maidens when she has herself withdrawn. It is dreadful to hear their prayer to Persephone, the great goddess adored at Eleusis, for a blessing on the poisoned bowl; little dreaming that it is the latest descendant of that very Erechtheid house, for whose honour they are so jealous, that those fatal drops are meant to destroy,—that the torch which they fear to see borne in the Eleusinian festival by an alien hand, will (if this plan of theirs succeeds) be quenched in the royal line for ever. It is thus they sing:—

CHORUS.

1st Strophe.

Daughter of Demeter, thou whose reign
Stretches over the night-haunting powers,
Speed the deadly draught in daylight
hours;
Draught my honoured lady sends,
Wherein wine with Gorgon blood-drop
blends,
Grasp unhallowed to restrain
Laid on her great house by worthless
hand.
Oh, may never Athens' king
From some newer lineage spring!
Be her ruler still of the Erechtheid band.

Antistrophe.

Should this death stroke fail, my lady
^{see}
All her toil made vain and bold design,
Quenched her hopes, she for her neck
will twine
Noose, or death by sword-stroke bring;
So, by sufferings sufferings finishing,
She to other life will flee.
Never could she bear, that high-born
dame,
Strangers ruling to descry
In her house, while yet her eye
Living can drink in the sun's bright
shining flame.

2d Strophe.

I must blush in Bacchus' sight,
Bacchus whom sweet songs delight,
Should his eye, that sleepless glances,
Spy by Fountain of Fair Dances

* A similar risk gave its interest to the lost Merope,—restored by Matthew Arnold.

Such a king, that sixth great night,
Where the torch-lit troop advances ;
When the star-eyed æther bright
Dances moved by inward gladness,
And the moon her stately measure
Treads, and beams out tranquil pleasure ;
When, where rivers whirl in madness,
And within the sea's blue waters,
Dance too Nereus' fifty daughters,
Honouring the Maid gold-crowned
And her mother far renowned ;—
Where, a king by Phœbus made,
Hopes this alien to reap treasure
In safe store for others laid.

Happily, however, the prayer of these injudicious supplicants is answered according to the final purpose in view of which it is made ; and not according to the means which they themselves choose for the fulfilment of that purpose. Cræusa does not succeed in compassing her unknown son's death : nevertheless, her failure at first seems only about to replace one horror by another, and to substitute for the prevented crime Cræusa's death at her own son's hand. For presently an affrighted servant rushes in to warn his mistress that her attempt has been discovered, and that she has been condemned to be stoned to death. Such is the sentence of the Delphic elders on the stranger who has tried to take the life of one of Apollo's servants. The narration is long and ornate, considering the critical moment at which it is spoken ; but such was the traditional practice of the Greek stage. So the handmaids are supposed to suspend their anxieties sufficiently to hear a somewhat prolix account of the sumptuous banquet spread by Xuthus for the whole city ; under fair hangings on which were portrayed all manner of astronomical shapes,—Pleiads and Hyades, and Orion with his sword, black-robed Night, the bright chariot of the Sun, and Dawn in swift pursuit of the stars. Most thrilling, however, becomes the tale, when Ion unsuspectingly raises the fatal

goblet to his lips. But the god protects his own, and the cup falls untasted at a chance word of evil omen. Its contents are poured out on the floor as a libation ; and the discovery of their real nature follows on this wise. Just then flew in a number of feathered revellers, the doves that dwell fearless in Apollo's house ; and one of these tasted the liquid which had filled Ion's goblet, and shrieked and died. The old tutor was seized, charged with poisoning it, and implicated his mistress by his confession. The youth demanded justice against her ; and having obtained her condemnation and her sentence, is now on his way to see it executed. The Chorus loudly bewail Cræusa's peril ; and see, all too late, how wrongly she has acted, and how just will be the retribution which seems likely to overtake them all. Her executioners advance ; they consist of the whole multitude of the city, all eager to punish her sacrilege. And from their cruel onslaught there is one refuge, and one only, open to her, the last she would herself have chosen,—the altar of the god whom she so lately defied. At first, moreover, it does not seem as if even this asylum would protect her long. Flushed with righteous indignation, the young Ion strides up to where his murderess (in intention) cowers ; and, with all the pitiless logic of youth, denies the criminal's right to the shelter of the innocent. Strange and pathetic is the scene to the audience, who know how these bitter foes are in truth related to each other. They tremble when youth in its innocent ignorance prepares to deal such hard measure on the sin that is so apparent, while its root of bitterest sorrow is so deeply concealed ; they shudder when, with matricidal hand uplifted, the pious Ion prepares to lay Cræusa's head, still beautiful with its golden tres-

ses, low beneath the Parnassian stones—which, he says in ghastly mockery, are to comb them out. A thrill of horror runs through them when, on Ion's asking her whether she means to pollute the holy altar by dying beside it, Cræusa replies, "Yes, since so shall I grieve one who has grieved me;" for in those low accents they overhear alike her undying sense of the wrong she has suffered, and her last appeal to the great deity, whose presence they divine in the background, whose interposition at this most critical moment they urgently desire.

Nor is that interposition long delayed. It comes in the form of that aged Pythian priestess, who of old picked up the deserted child at the temple-door and cared for him like a mother; to greet whom Ion for a moment forgets his wrath, with a

Hail, O dear mother! though thou didst not bear me.

Whether the worthy old woman's entreaty to him to forgive his foe, and enter Athens pure from her blood, would have prevailed with him finally is uncertain: at any rate she creates a momentary diversion in Cræusa's favour by presenting Ion with the swaddling-clothes in which she found him wrapped, and the open chest in which he was laid,—tokens which she never showed him while he was in Apollo's service; but which, now that the god has resigned him to a mortal, she thinks it right to give him, that by their means he may seek out his unknown mother.

The boy unfolds the rich robes with dread, lest they should reveal to him some unwelcome secret, yet with a heart melting towards the hand which wrapped them round him; and with a soft pity for his own infant self, left with (as he feels sure) sore unwillingness, unprotected in its helpless state—

For I, when in my mother's kind arms fondled,
I should have had a happy, gladsome life,
Was snatched away from that dear mother's care.
And she who bare me, too, was wretched; felt
A like woe, losing all her child's carcases.

But another eye than Ion's is scanning his birth-tokens even more eagerly than his; nor is the result of its scrutiny long doubtful. Cræusa has recognised in them her own handiwork; and leaves the altar at the peril of her life to claim the youth, whose death she so lately sought to compass, as her son. By her knowledge of the contents of the chest which, as yet, she has only seen from afar,—gold ornament, olive crown, and patterns wrought by her own girlish hand at the loom on the swaddling-clothes,—she convinces her, at first, reluctant hearer of the truth of her story; and mother and son are at last folded in each other's arms. Ion has found the love for which his heart had been hungering: to Cræusa it seems as though the grave had restored to her her dead; and she acknowledges that she has received compensation in full for her long sorrows, by exclaiming—

Child, I did not bear thee tearless,
Left thee full of anguish, cheerless;
But my lips, thy cheek now pressing,
Win delight past earth's best blessing.

Sonless, childless now no longer,
Now my cold hearth flames, now stronger
Is my land made by a king;
Now Erechtheus once more rises,
Night his house no more surprises,
But bright rays fresh morning bring.

Still memory must fling its passing cloud, when Ion, having wished to send for his father, has to learn that, in strict truth, he has no right so to call Xuthus. Then Cræusa exclaims, in tones of mournful pride blended with anguish—

Not amid torches and the dances cheerful

Was I a proud bride led.

Where on the rock the nightingales sing
tearful

In secret to great Phœbus was I wed.

To no fond nurture might my breast re-
ceive thee ;

Thine infant limbs I might not lave ;

Cast out to Hades, I was forced to leave
thee,

To birds a prey in lonely cave.

"How nearly I requited this by slaying thee,—a far worse deed than such unwilling desertion !" is Ion's remorseful reflection, as he sees his mother's penitent sorrow. But may he venture to believe that his is indeed the glorious parentage attributed to him by Crœusa ? Can he claim Phœbus for his father on her unsupported word alone ? All doubt on this score is set at rest, according to the custom of the Greek stage, by a glorious apparition—that of Athené ; who, as the patroness of Athens, may be relied on to guard the purity of its kings' descent. Apollo has sent her, rather than awaken memories of past wrong by appearing himself. From her lips Ion receives full satisfaction, and the promise of a glorious reign on the throne of his Erechtheid ancestors. He, with his two half-brothers, Dorus and Achæus, whom Crœusa is yet to bear to Xuthus, are to be the three eponymous heroes of Hellas.

And now Crœusa lays aside her long enmity to Apollo. She sees that while she accused him of neglecting her infant, he in truth was watching over it with parental fondness ; despatching Hermes to bear it to his own temple's shelter, and there nurturing it up to be the noble boy who now stands beside her. She perceives how the oracle to her husband, which she thought an act of treachery to herself, was really meant for her advantage ; to lead Xuthus to receive her own son willingly into their house. She discerns how, while in her passion-

ate sadness she was exclaiming (like a more pious sufferer), "All these things are against me," a divine hand was really dexterously weaving the tangled threads of her life into the smooth and shining fabric of perfect joy. She has come to Delphi a childless mourner ; she returns from it a joyful mother, alike in possession and in expectation, with her good husband's love unforfeited, and all her desires fulfilled. And so at last she retracts the charges she brought in her haste against the deity, and offers him her praise instead. Athené graciously accepts it on his behalf, saying with deep significance—

"Tis well that with changed mind thou
Phœbus praisest,

For, though the gods may long delay
their help,

Yet, when at last it comes, it comes with
might.

And so the play comes to an end, and the audience depart with the happy feeling that they have been assisting at a very complete theodiceæ, or vindication of the ways of the gods to men ; and with an increase of pious confidence in their goodness.

And yet, and yet, is the poet himself satisfied ? Hardly ; if we may judge, not so much by Crœusa's bitter words spoken in passion, as by the calm and deliberate utterances of the young Ion concerning his great patron's misdeeds. For, after all, even on the most favourable representation, a god who may be wise and mighty, and occasionally beneficent, but who is not perfectly holy, is but a poor object of worship. And so, to an intelligent and thoughtful listener among the Greeks, this fine drama must have left painful thoughts, strong doubts as to whether the conceptions of the "gods whose dwelling is not with men," entertained by his fathers, could be the right ones ; a conflict between the promptings on

the one hand of piety, and on the other of morality; since, if gods, like men, can do amiss, and have youthful frailties to make up for, can there be a moral law of strictly universal and eternal obligation? or, if such a law in truth exists, then, must not its Framer be yet to seek, and dwell, if indeed He dwells anywhere at all, in some region far higher than the highest summit of Olympus?

The faulty theology of this beautiful story is also a serious drawback on the reader's pleasure now. The more charming the picture presented in it of the young Ion, sheltered (like the child Samuel at Shiloh, or the infant Joash at Jerusalem) by a holy place, guided and guarded by a sacred priesthood, and early initiated into the mysteries of a divine worship, the sadder it is to think of the tremendous contrast between the object of Ion's infant veneration and the true God. An atmosphere of awe and religious reverence surrounds the young nurslings of each sanctuary alike; to each it is an honour and a delight to perform the most menial service in the house of his great master; but alas for the awakening intelligence which has to disapprove of his mighty guardian's conduct, instead of basking, like the young Samuel, in the light of perfect justice and goodness, and finding year after year only set a fresh seal to the truth earliest taught him, that "there is none holy as the Lord"! * Who can wonder, too, at poor Cræusa's readiness to right herself by unhallowed means, thinking as she must have thought of the lawgivers above? But, with this important exception,

there is little to alloy the reader's delight in the "Ion" of Euripides; in its skilful construction and most artistically developed story; in its pathetic portraiture of maternal and filial affection; in its beautiful lyrics; and, above all, in its exquisite delineations of youth at its brightest and loveliest in Ion—and of womanhood in its most pathetic sorrow, and its fairest and most queenly dignity, in Cræusa.

Such is a brief account of one of the most pleasing of Greek plays—of one which allows more scope to individual character, which more subordinates the chorus with its generalities to the lyrical utterance of strong personal feeling, than the drama of Hellas often does; which, deriving its interest from the most sacred fount of human affection, can never seem antiquated or hard to understand, since, although in very precious materials, and with a costly setting, it but presents to us the simplest yet the most pathetic of groups—the mother and the son.

The dewy morning freshness of its opening, the "clear shining after rain" of its close, must be welcome to every heart; and seldom has the poet's magic wand been waved to a better purpose than when at its touch the tangled thickets and yawning precipices in which Ion and Cræusa seemed about to perish, disappear, and before them (in the words of the later singer of another Ion)—

"The pansied turf 'grows' air to wingèd feet,
And circling forests, by ethereal touch
Enchanted, 'wear' the livery of the sky,
As if about to melt in golden light
Shapes of one heavenly vision."

* 1 Samuel ii. 2.

REATA; OR, WHAT'S IN A NAME.—PART VII.

CHAPTER XXV.—MOURNING.

Duke.—“ . . . And that I owe Olivia.”

—*Twelfth Night.*

THE winter had passed very quietly at Steinbühl; except Arnold's excursion to Poland, nothing of any interest had occurred. A few changes and differences were visible about the place—the result, of course, of the improvement which had come to the Bodenbach fortunes. Nothing very brilliant or very striking, certainly; only that the shutters were all painted freshly, that the summer-house had got a new roof, that the damages of the weather-beaten wall were repaired, and that the old battered weather-cock on the top of the house had been accommodated with a new pivot. Even these little changes went a long way towards making the place more cheerful. And the same small improvements were visible within: the drawing-room was newly papered; there were new curtains in the dining-room; and in the room which was, *par excellence*, the family sitting-room, there now stood a *chaise-longue*, luxurious of shape and soft of cushions, replacing the hard, dingy old sofa of bygone days.

On this comfortable couch Gabrielle now spent most of her days: in the cold winter-time she had spent her whole days there, never leaving the house; and even now that the snow was melting, and the early spring beginning to set in, she seldom forsook it. She was thinner and paler than six months ago; she was more listless and more fretful. To her father and her brother, who saw her every day, the change was not very striking. They knew she was delicate;

Gabrielle had always been delicate—had always regularly been knocked up every winter, and had always as regularly revived every spring; and now that spring was coming, of course she would revive again. Passing one's days on a *chaise-longue* is dull work for a young girl. Gabrielle wanted companionship; she was restless without somebody to talk to, and to talk to her; and Hermine Schwerendorf, therefore, came to see her often, spending whole afternoons with her, sometimes remaining at Steinbühl for a week at a time. At present she was not there, so Gabrielle was more depressed and more irritable than usual.

The early spring had set in, as I have said—that is to say, the frost and snow were gone—but none of spring's amenities had come to rejoice the earth yet. A rough sharp wind was storming about, shaking the last particles of snow from the trees, and brushing off the solitary dead leaves which here and there had clung to their branches all winter—blowing the damp and moisture from the earth, and making everything ready for the first blades and blossoms. It was on one of these days in the very beginning of March, when the wind was howling in the chimneys and rattling at the windows, that an event of some importance came to disturb the quiet current of life at Steinbühl.

Arnold was away; he had been away since the day before, having some business in the next town. He was to be back that evening,

and the old Baron was looking forward with impatience to the moment of his return. During the whole of that stormy, windy day, Baron Walther spent his time in walking about the house, wringing his hands, lamenting aloud, and wishing that his son would return.

"Why doesn't Arnold come? Arnold must do something."

Gabrielle, who was always under the influence of her surroundings, and whose nerves were already off their balance—the small balance they ever had—by the noise of the wind howling in the chimney, caught the infection from her father, and sobbed quietly on her *chaise-longue*. Her pet greyhound, who usually took his cue from his mistress, crouched all day on his cushion, trembling and quivering, and whimpering to himself at every fresh gust of wind which shook the house.

There was very little dinner eaten at Steinbühl that day; the two solitary members of the family were too much upset. As long as the servant lingered in the room, they sat opposite each other in moody silence; and the moment the door was closed, the old Baron set up his lamentations again, pouring them with mournful fluency into his daughter's ear; and Gabrielle sat with her handkerchief over her eyes, and cried without quite knowing what she was crying about.

At last that woe-begone windy day approached its end, and the sound of wheels on the gravel outside announced Arnold's return. Arnold had driven a long way in the open dog-cart, and had brought a healthy appetite with him; he was, in fact, famishing for his supper, and his spirits were rather higher than usual—partly from the effect of the invigorating wind, and

partly from some small success which had attended his agricultural purchases in G——.

"Well, father, everybody well, I hope," he exclaimed, in a loud cheerful voice, as he entered the room rather noisily. "I got on splendidly at G——. The new cart will be here to-morrow. . . . But mercy on us all, what has happened?" he asked, stopping suddenly in the middle of the room, and staring from his father's pale face to Gabrielle's red eyes.

"A great misfortune, my dear son," replied the old man, in a shaky voice.

"What has happened? is anybody dead? Tell me quick," said Arnold, turning to his father with a tone almost of command.

"We must bear it with Christian resignation," murmured Baron Walther.

"Who is dead?" repeated Arnold, with a look of painful expectation on his face. "Not Otto, or Hermine?"

"My cousin Olivia," said his father, with a groan.

"Thank heavens!" exclaimed Arnold, the look of painful expectation vanishing instantly, and sinking down in his place at the supper-table.

"Arnold, what do you mean?" exclaimed the old Baron, starting up. "My cousin——"

"I really beg your pardon, father," said Arnold, helping himself to a large plateful of cold ham; "but it was such a relief after the fright you gave me. Of course I am very sorry," he added; "but as I never saw my aunt, and hardly had heard of her existence till a year ago, you cannot expect me to be overwhelmed with the blow."

Gabrielle, gathering from her brother's voice and demeanour that the misfortune was not as absolute as she had believed, began

drying her tears, and drew her chair nearer to the table.

"Ah, Arnold, it is all very well for you!" sighed his father, sitting down again: "you can speak like that; but you know what poor Olivia was to me once."

"Yes, I know perfectly," replied Arnold, cheerfully; "but you haven't seen her for thirty-two years, and you didn't get much good of her living at the other side of the world."

"I don't want to argue about it," said the Baron, plaintively (the old Baron never cared about arguing with his son); "but what is to be done? Can't you do something, Arnold?"

"What do you want me to do, father?"—and Arnold helped himself to four roast-potatoes. "I am afraid I can't bring her to life again." Arnold's spirits and appetite were decidedly out of proportion to the extent of the family misfortune.

"Then is it not very dreadful?" inquired Gabrielle, utterly mystified by the opposite views her father and Arnold took on the subject.

"Nothing for you to cry about. Will you pass me the butter, Gabrielle? And why are you not eating? Why are neither of you eating?"

"But how could I eat?" exclaimed the old Baron. "How could I eat as long as——"

"As long as aunt Olivia is dead?" completed Arnold readily, with an imperceptible twitch of his eyebrows. "I am afraid you would find this inconvenient in the long-run. Come, father, I must insist on your taking something. Gabrielle, let me help you."

Arnold's example acted with wonderful power in restoring the spirits and appetites of both father and daughter. Baron Walther, true to his fictitious attachment, had

thought it incumbent on him to raise a great lamentation; but after the long hours of wailing and despondency and fasting, it was rather a relief to be pressed into taking a more cheerful view of the matter, even at the sacrifice of the more romantic side of the case.

"In what shape did the news come?" naturally asked Arnold, after comfort had in some degree been restored to the family circle, and his own appetite been deprived of its first keen edge.

"A letter from the companion, and the certificate of the burial enclosed," explained his father.

"Oh, the companion! that Fräulein Lackenegg! I think that is her name?"

"Yes, that is the name; poor Olivia mentioned it in one of her letters. But she only signs her first name; something odd it is,—I can't remember what exactly. I'll give you the letter; it is very strangely written, and I was so upset at the moment that I could hardly make it out."

"And she is coming to live with us," put in Gabrielle.

"The dickens she is! She doesn't say so, does she?"

"Oh no, poor thing! she does not say so exactly. She only wants to come to us for a few months; and we are bound to take her, of course. You know my uncle Max in his will commends her so warmly to all the members of the family; and after all I owe to him and to my cousin Olivia, it would be impossible——"

"But, my dear father," interrupted Arnold, while cutting himself a large slice of the home-baked bread, "I am sure I am not advocating the course of having Fräulein Lackenegg turned away from our door. Let her have a home with us, by all means, poor old thing! I was only a little startled

at the idea. Where is the letter?" he inquired presently, having risen from the supper-table.

Two papers were handed him by his father: the one a letter in a woman's writing—that writing they

had already learnt to know from aunt Olivia's letters, which, perhaps on account of her weak eyesight, had always been penned by the companion; the other a certificate drawn out as follows:—

*Certificación de entierro
Nuestra Señorita
Olivia Bodenbach Bodenbach
fallecida el 3 Enero
enterrada el 5 Enero 1873
en el Cementerio de
Nuestra Señora de los Remedios
Cholula Miguel Lopez*

(Translation of Certificate.)

CERTIFICATE OF BURIAL.

High-born lady,
Olivia Bodenbach Bodenbach ;
died January 3d ;
buried January 5th, 1873,
in the cemetery of
Nuestra Señora de los Remedios Cholula.

MIGUEL LOPEZ.

"BARON BODENBACH,—I have lost my benefactress. Perhaps you do not know who I am ; but you may have heard of your cousin's companion.

"I enclose the certificate of your cousin Baroness Olivia Bodenbach's burial. Her death took place at Cholula on the 3d of January. Her end was sudden.

"Will you give me a home with you for a short time?—not more than two or three months. I must come to Europe ; and there is nowhere else where I can go but to you, if you will receive me. Soon I hope to be received by my own relations.

"I don't ask you to receive me

on charity, for I am not quite destitute. Pecuniarily I shall not be a burden to you.

"Hamburg, I suppose is the best route to take. I have been told that it is highly improper for a girl to travel alone, but there is no other alternative ; and I daresay I shall get on well enough without protection. Surely any one over twenty ought to be able to take care of herself."

Here the letter ended, and was signed merely with "Reata."

Arnold read both letter and certificate through attentively ; then laid them down and considered.

"Can you make all the letter

out!" asked the Baron. "Isn't it strangely written? and why does she say she is over twenty? and call herself a girl?"

"Well, I suppose she has the right to call herself a girl if she likes; and if she is forty, of course she is over twenty. But that fact is so self-evident that she need not have stated it. Otto certainly said she was forty or thereabouts," continued Arnold, staring at the lines of the letter pensively. He took up the certificate again, and stared at it pensively too. "Odd, untidy sort of scrawl this; they seem to do these sort of things without much method over there. And what is the good of sending it at all? If she is dead, of course she is buried; at least it is to be hoped so. Rather informal, this way of sending, it seems; but I suppose we shall be hearing from the lawyers soon."

"We shall be reading her death in the papers," sighed the old Baron.

"Not very likely that it should find its way into our papers here," remarked Arnold. Then, after another glance at the letter, "Rather queer fish that Fräulein Lackenegg, it strikes me—a strong-minded old maid, presumably."

Two days later, Arnold, who had apparently been engrossed in his newspaper, suddenly startled his father by saying, in a loud voice, "I wonder if she is forty?"

"Who is forty? What are you speaking of?" inquired the Baron, disturbed in the after-dinner slumber which had been stealing over him.

"Fräulein Lackenegg."

"But of course she is forty, if Otto says so; and she says herself that she is over twenty."

"She might be twenty-one," suggested Arnold.

"Twenty-one!" repeated his

father, staring at him in amazement. "How can she be twenty-one? What have you got into your head, Arnold?"

Arnold had got something into his head—an idea he was working out, a train of thought he was following up. He did not tell his father what it was; but when the Baron suggested writing to Otto in order to clear up the companion's age, he answered evasively, "No, I think not;" and when, that same day, he sent off a letter to his brother with the announcement of their aunt's death, there was no mention in it of Fräulein Lackenegg, or the prospect of her coming to Europe.

Within the last few days there had also come a letter to Arnold from old Boradembki, who, having been commissioned to find out in a delicate and roundabout manner something distinct about the amount of Otto's fortune and expectations, did so in a way that was not roundabout at all; and this letter had appeared to Arnold very satisfactory.

As yet, no further intimation of Miss Bodenbach's death had reached them; of course none could reach them till the next mail. The old Baron had quite calmed down again, and had got accustomed to the idea that there was no "dearly-beloved cousin Olivia" living and breathing at the other side of the ocean. Arnold never had been much startled by the news. There was nothing particularly startling in the intelligence of Miss Bodenbach's death: she was not very much past fifty, it is true, but they had known that her health was not strong; and the Bodenbach family were not long-lived, as a rule. Her death could not in any way affect them materially, according to the dispositions of uncle Max's property. The only palpable difference,

in fact, which it would bring to them, was the advent of this Fräulein Lackenegg, this companion whom they felt bound to receive, in regard to the wishes expressed in their uncle Max's will; and after all, this would only be a change for a few months.

Arnold, by his father's desire, had written a politely-worded letter to Fräulein Lackenegg, expressing the proper amount of family sorrow for the misfortune which had come to pass; asking for more particulars and details of Miss Bodenbach's

death; and begging her to regard their house as her home for as long as might be convenient.

Just about the time that this letter was reaching its destination, the person for whom it was destined was reaching Europe; and just as Arnold was wondering indifferently whether this mail would bring them any further news from Mexico, the whole family were startled by another letter in the same handwriting as the last, but not coming from Mexico.

CHAPTER XXVI.—APRIL FOOLS.

"Erschien . . .
Ein Mädchen schön und wunderbar.

Sie war nicht in dem Thal geboren,
Man wusste nicht, woher sie kam."

—*Das Mädchen aus der Fremde*: SCHILLER.

It was the 1st of April, the day of fools and fool-making. The sun was shining outside; and Gabrielle, being in one of her hysterically gay moods, had thrown herself heart and soul into the task of waylaying, entrapping, puzzling, and generally aggravating the persons of her surrounding. Unfortunately for them, there were only Arnold and her father whom she could operate upon; and these two victims therefore came in for an undue share in her petty experiments. From morning till mid-day neither of her two relations were allowed to enjoy an hour of undisturbed peace; there was a succession of starts and mystifications, followed invariably by Gabrielle's cry of "April fool!" There was salt in the sugar-basin at breakfast, and pounded sugar in all the salt-cellar; there was a horrible compound in the teapot in place of the genuine infusion; when her father took up his hat to go out, a shower of empty snail-shells came clattering out of it; and

when Arnold was putting on his high boots in a great hurry, he found a clothes-brush rammed down into each: there were false messages coming at every minute, and numberless notes addressed to Baron Bodenbach, or Baron Arnold Bodenbach—all invariably containing the words "April fool!" Arnold was twice sent to his father in a hurry, to find that the old Baron had never asked for him: and once Baron Walther was entreated to go to the window, as his son was waiting to point out something to him in the avenue; and having got out of his easy-chair to comply with the request, was startled by his daughter bursting into the room, and terrified by the shrill and often-repeated cry of "April fool!"

"Yes, yes, my dear, yes," said the old man, in a scared tone; "I understand quite well, but I wish you would not scream so loud. So glad, though, to see you in such spirits, dear Gabrielle."

Even a strong man's nerves will

end by being unstrung by such a course of trivial alarms. By the middle of the day the old Baron was completely off his balance: to touch a book or taste food was a matter fraught with perils; he would look round nervously on entering a room, half afraid lest some hidden danger were lurking at his elbow; he saw a trap in every chair or footstool, and shrank back in alarm at the sound of his daughter's step. At last, after Arnold had nearly broken his leg in stumbling over a complicated apparatus of twine disposed across the door of his bedroom, patience and temper alike gave way, and he made a stand. Gabrielle, at length frightened into passiveness, consoled herself by devoting the rest of the forenoon to fabricating a mysterious and deceptive parcel for the old family doctor.

When a letter with the Trieste post-mark was put into Arnold's hand, he had his greatcoat and high boots on, preparatory to riding over to N—. He turned the letter over and looked at it suspiciously, having first glanced at his sister with inquiring severity; but this time there was innocence written on Gabrielle's face—she was tying up the last knot of the doctor's parcel.

"Is that another of those April letters, or whatever you call them?" inquired the old Baron, anxiously.

"Well, I don't know; it looks remarkably like it," said his son, having perused the note. "Don't exactly know what to make of it. There is no necessity for immediate action, at any rate. I shall be back at six, and we can hold a conclave then. Here, father," and he tossed the paper across to the Baron, took up his riding-whip, left the room, mounted his horse, and trotted down the avenue, leaving Baron

Walther and Gabrielle to make of the letter the most they could.

"TRIESTE, March 31st.

"I have come by Trieste, after all; the steamers suited better than the Hamburg ones. The passage was horribly bad—equinoctial gales, I was told. I am a little tired, and shall stay here till I am rested—perhaps some days. As soon as I am rested I shall come. I don't know whether you expected me by this mail, but I hope I am not coming too soon.

"Do not think me forward; it is the only thing I could do. There are circumstances necessitating my leaving Mexico which I hope to be able to explain to you later.

"REATA."

"Well," said Arnold, that evening on his return from N—, "what do you make of the letter? and have you come to any conclusions about it?"

The old Baron had come to no conclusions at all, except that the letter was probably an April fool.

"My first impression too. Let me have another look at it, and I will give you my verdict."

"Genuine," he pronounced—"quite genuine," after having submitted the post-mark and stamp to a critical examination.

"I can't feel quite sure," said his father, shaking his head still incredulously; an atmosphere of April fools had gone far towards destroying the old Baron's confiding disposition.

"No doubt about it; it is genuine," repeated Arnold; and the Baron, who was accustomed to believe implicitly in what his son said, was soon brought to believe also that it was genuine.

"But then, do you really mean to say that my poor cousin Olivia's companion is in Europe?"

"Well, you see she says so," answered Arnold, drily.

"But then she has not waited to hear from us, apparently."

"Apparently not."

"What can make her in such a hurry?"

"My dear father, I am perfectly unable to form a conjecture; she talks about circumstances, and holds out hopes of explaining them some day."

"Well, but what is to be done, Arnold?"

"Have the bed in the spare room made, and buy an extra cup, saucer, and plate, if we have not got enough in the house. That is all I can suggest."

"But there are quite enough cups in the house," put in Gabrielle.

"I do wish you would not treat the matter so trivially, Arnold," said Baron Walther, plaintively. "Remember what I owe to my cousin Olivia. After all she was to me once, I could not bear to treat anybody who ever had anything to do with her in any way with——"

"With slight? no, of course not, father; but what else can you suggest?"

"Suggest? oh, I didn't mean to suggest; but how is she to get here?"

"Of course we will send the dog-cart for her—that goes for granted; I never meant her to walk from the station."

"Yes, that is all very well; but how is she to get from Trieste to N——? Surely some of us ought to go and fetch her?"

"Some of us fetch her, father? How very unnecessary! If she has been able to get from Mexico to Trieste without assistance, she can surely find her way from Trieste to Steinbühl."

"Ah yes, Arnold; but do not speak so fast. Remember all that

I owe to the memory of my cousin Olivia. The poor thing may be old and in bad health——"

"Yes, but she may be young," interrupted Arnold, "and in excellent health. You know we have not cleared up that point yet."

"And it would be heartless of us," continued the old Baron, without hearing his son's remark, "to expose her to the disagreeables of travelling alone. I really think, Arnold, considering all that I owe to my cousin, that one of us ought to go and fetch her." And having given forth this independent opinion, the Baron leant back further in his arm-chair.

Arnold continued smoking in silence.

The family conclave was being held in the family sitting-room—the room which was the centre of life at Steinbühl. There was a more orthodox drawing-room, but it was rarely used, in winter never at all. The sitting-room was easier to heat and pleasanter to sit in. It was a room almost square in shape, with a rather low ceiling—all the ceilings were low at Steinbühl. The paper on the walls and the carpets on the floor dated from some remote period; and nobody had thought of renewing them, even when other things about the house were getting renewed. The sitting-room was not intended for ornament—it was intended for comfort alone; and shabby as it might appear to the eye of a stranger, it certainly was comfortable—an apartment dear to every member of the Bodenbach family. It was furnished with every odd and end of furniture in the house: chairs and tables and book-shelves, which had come out of other rooms, or had survived other sets of furniture; carpets which had grown too shabby for the drawing-room; footstools and cushions in woollen embroidery,

worked by Baroness Bodenbach, who had had a passion for wool-work during her married life, and now too far faded to be used except in the strictest privacy of the family circle. No two chairs in the room were covered with the same material, no two tables of the same shape. In one corner stood the rickety old pianoforte, now seldom used; the old Baron's formidable arm-chair stood here also—a very wide-seated, ample-backed chair, with heavy walnut carvings about the arms and legs, also a wreck from former days. Gabrielle's *chaise-longue* was positively the only new piece of furniture in the room. The walls were pretty well covered, but the pictures which hung there were quite as miscellaneous as the furniture; prints coloured and uncoloured, lithographs, photographs, pencil-drawings, and two or three small oil-paintings; these latter, family portraits, a few unfortunately-circumstanced ancestors, who, like the furniture, had been considered too shabby for the drawing-room, and had been excluded from the ranks of their better-preserved relatives. Amongst these banished bearers of the Bodenbach name was a very small and very dingy painting of Maximilian Bodenbach, taken as a very young man; a strikingly handsome face, the beauty of the features not even to be disguised by the bad execution, and the hardly veiled expression of sensuality and conceit marking the lines of his mouth and chin. On the strength of the last year's events, Baron Walther had made a move towards having his uncle's picture newly framed and varnished, and hung in a place of honour in the drawing-room; but Arnold, in his matter-of-fact way, had thrown cold water on the idea, and as yet uncle Max remained in his obscure position.

At the further end of the sitting-room a glass door opened on to the creeper-overgrown balcony, whence on either side a flight of worm-eaten wooden steps led down to the gravel below. In summer this door usually stood open, but now it was still tightly closed and barricaded with matting and sand-bags against draughts from without; and the creepers on the balcony had not yet begun to put out their fresh green shoots, but looked like an ugly network of coarse black rope.

On this evening of the 1st of April the three members of the Bodenbach family were sitting together, exactly in the same way, almost in the same positions, in which they had sat together every evening during the past winter: the Baron in his gigantic arm-chair, with a newspaper on his knee and a pair of spectacles on his nose; Arnold also in an arm-chair, but of more moderate proportions, and also with a newspaper, but without spectacles of course, and smoking a Virginia cigar; Gabrielle reclining on her sofa, not occupied with doing anything in particular, her Italian greyhound beside her on the floor, lying on the most faded of the woolwork footstools. It was the last half-hour before supper-time; the shutters were closed and the room moderately lighted by a pair of lamps. When Arnold had smoked a few minutes in silence, he said, in answer to his father's last remark, "I suppose you mean that I ought to go and fetch her, father? Isn't that it?" Arnold's tone of voice was not much calculated to encourage any hopes his father might have entertained as to his fetching *Fräulein Lackenegg*.

"Well, you see," he began, in a conciliatory tone, "neither Gabrielle nor I could go very well."

"I should think not," remarked

his son, grimly. "Well, supposing I do start for Trieste, what am I expected to do when I arrive there?"

No answer from the old Baron.

"I should be obliged to walk about the streets inquiring whether any lady has arrived from Mexico. We haven't even got a clue to her whereabouts, you see"—taking up the letter again. "She has not had the sense even to put the name of her hotel; we are positively without clue. Besides, I haven't an inkling of what she is like, not even whether she is old or young; she may be anything from twenty to sixty."

"Gracious me, yes!" suddenly interrupted the old Baron; "that would never do—I quite forgot. You said she may turn out to be young? You could not travel all the way from Trieste with a young girl. Fancy how awkward the position would be!"

Arnold looked rather amused.

"Why awkward?" asked Gabrielle at this juncture. "Do young ladies give more trouble than old ones in travelling?"

"I don't see that it need necessarily be awkward," said Arnold; "but I know the position would be no end of a bore to me. I suppose if I gave her novels to read, it would keep her quiet, and prevent her talking to me."

"No, no, Arnold, that would never do; it is quite out of the question." And Baron Walther put his reading-spectacles straight on his nose and looked slightly shocked at his son's levity. "But, you know, you might go to Trieste and see whether she is young or old, and then—let me see, if——"

"If she is young, leave her in the lurch," broke in Arnold.

"No, that doesn't do either. But surely there must be some way of arranging it? Let me see,"

said the Baron, sitting up in his easy-chair and applying himself to the matter in hand. "If one only had a notion about her age."

"Suppose we telegraph and ask her," suggested his son; "only, you see, we haven't got the address."

"But perhaps she mightn't like to tell her age," remarked Gabrielle, with feminine instinct, from the depths of her sofa-cushions.

"If somebody else could only go with you, to make it proper," continued the old Baron. "I myself could not stand the journey, and Otto is not here."

"And if he were, it would not help matters much," interposed Arnold.

"And Gabrielle cannot go either. Perhaps—Hermine——" Baron Walther hesitated. "No, no, that will not do either."

Arnold laughed outright. "Well, that would be going from the frying-pan into the fire with a vengeance, travelling to Trieste with one young lady in order to travel back with two. No, we must think of some other plan. I declare it is just like the riddle of the fox, the goose, and the bag of corn. I think, after all, you will have to trust to my discrimination and discretion about age; only give me a few *points-d'appui* for contingencies. Down to what age may I travel with her?"

"But, Arnold, I cannot say; it is so difficult to determine"—and the Baron looked very much distressed.

"Shall we say thirty-five?" persisted Arnold, who had long ago decided in his mind that Fräulein Lackenegg should be allowed to travel from Trieste alone, whatever her age might be. "Or let us make a compromise; may I travel with her if she is young and ugly?"

"Really, Arnold——" in a tone of querulous admonition.

"Or old and good-looking? And what degree of ugliness will qualify her? If she has good hair and bad teeth? or bad hair and good teeth? Or——"

"Arnold, Arnold, do stop; you are confusing me so."

"I suppose if she squints——"

Arnold was beginning, when Gabrielle's Italian greyhound raised himself slowly on his faded footstool and put up his ears in a listening attitude.

"*Couche*, Chéri; there is nothing to listen to. But seriously, my dear father, I do not think it is worth discussing the point further; it is probably too late already. If I started now, I should very likely cross her on the way. Whatever her age may be, she seems able and inclined to act for herself. What is the matter with that dog of yours, Gabrielle?"

Chéri had not relaxed his listening attitude; he sat immovable, only his long greyhound nose quivering with emotion, and a low, prolonged growl coming from the depths of his narrow chest.

"Why, this letter was written yesterday," went on Arnold. "If she were sharp, she might be here the day after to-morrow, even resting two days; it is only ten hours from Trieste, after all."

"The day after to-morrow!" shrieked Gabrielle, starting up from her cushions, and getting off her sofa abruptly. "How dreadful! And there will be so many things to be done; the room to get ready, and fowls to be killed, or something. I shall never be ready in time." And the youthful housekeeper stood with her hands together in an attitude expressive of the deepest perplexity, as if meditating an instant raid upon the hen-house.

"Well, I suppose it won't take you two days to murder a hen or have a bed made," said her brother, who was in a strangely contradictory humour to-night. "What is the matter with that dog?" Chéri had leapt off his cushion, and broken into loud, resounding, persistent barks, which pierced the ears, and drowned conversation. The maid-servant now came into the room; and as soon as Chéri was sufficiently silenced, and had been compelled to return to his footstool, which he did under protest, and where he sat growling beneath his breath, she explained that there was a lady outside who asked to speak to Baron Bodenbach.

"There have been so many of them to-day," said the old Baron, peevishly. "It is another April fool, of course. I have been told four times to-day that somebody wanted to speak to me, and I am not going to leave the room for any one now."

"Depend upon it, Gabrielle, it is some revenge of the doctor's for that parcel of yours this forenoon. I think you ought to be sent out to speak to her."

"No, I am not going out. I am not going to be caught," pouted Gabrielle.

"Well, April fool or no April fool, somebody will have to see her," remarked Arnold. "We can't have an April fool hanging about the house till midnight."

"Show her in here, then, in heaven's name!" exclaimed the old Baron, resignedly; "and be quick about it, for it is close to supper-time."

Half a minute later the door opened again, and a small white dog trotted in—a small white dog, not over-clean, but very self-possessed. The small dog trotted in and made straight for Chéri's

cushion. There was a second's pause. The maid-servant was still holding the door open, but the dimly-lighted passage outside showed nothing. The three members of the Bodenbach family looked expectantly and asked themselves, "Is this all?" Clearly an April fool! The small white dog stopped within two paces of Chéri's cushion and set itself into the orthodox position of pointing; then advanced slowly, one paw in front of the other, with eyes steadily fixed on the greyhound, who sat the while bolt upright, trembling in every limb with canine hysterics, his head a little turned away, half nervously, half in indignation, preferring not to meet the unflinching gaze of the small white dog. Then suddenly from the dimly-lighted passage a tall, slight figure in black entered the room quickly. She came in quickly, but not with much assurance; and having made two steps into the room, she hesitated and stopped, looking shyly about her.

"Are you an April fool?" asked Gabrielle, standing in the middle of the room, and staring at the newcomer with very wide-open eyes.

The Baron and Arnold had risen also, and were regarding the lady in black with mingled astonishment and inquiry—the Baron with his reading-spectacles slipped down to the extreme point of his nose, Arnold with the stump of his Virginia cigar held between his fingers.

The stranger had a thick veil over her face: she put it up when Gabrielle spoke; she had not looked at any one but Gabrielle yet.

"May I ask to whom we have the honour of speaking?" said Arnold, in his politest, stiffest, most frigid tone.

She turned her head quickly towards him, and glanced at him for a moment with great, dark, questioning eyes. Whose was that voice so like another's voice?—that face which had in it something of another's face? And as Arnold's gaze met hers, he asked himself wonderingly, "Who is that beautiful woman?"

"I am not an April fool," and her clear young voice trembled a little nervously, and a vivid colour came into her face; "I am, I am ——" She hesitated. "I have come from Mexico."

CHAPTER XXVII.—THE LAST TOAST.

"Le tems a laissé son manteau
De vent, de froideur et de pluie,
Et s'est vestu de broderie
De soleil luisant cler et beau,
Il n'y a beste ni oyseau
Qu'en son jargon, ne chante ou crye
Le tems a quitté son manteau
De vent, de froideur et de pluie."

—CHARLES D'ORLÉANS: *Le Renouveau*
(fifteenth century).

With the end of March a sudden burst of spring had broken the bonds of the long Polish winter; without preparation, without warning, it came. The day before, everything was still deep winter—as deep a winter as elsewhere in January, the snow lying unmelted on the earth, the lake at Rzeszów

still frozen and hard. Next day, of a sudden, the sun shone out warm and bright, and a great kindly breath of mild spring air came and touched the snow and the ice, and bade them make haste and depart. And great haste they did make; they dripped and dropped from all the roofs and from every

branch and twig, scuttling and hurrying out of sight, but hardly fast enough for the flowers, that began pushing their impatient heads out of the damp earth before even the snow was well melted. The daisies that were beginning to open their baby eyes, under the elm-trees on the dam, blinked astonishedly at the large fields of ice that floated about in the lake, jostling against each other, and getting softer and slushier and less like ice every minute. A week ago the sledges had still been running merrily over the lake, as they had done since November; but now their reign was over for this year, and they had retired into private life. On the first day of the thaw, the spring had been inaugurated by the collapsing of the ice under one of those foolhardy little sledges that would still insist on believing that the ice was firm. This was the signal for abandoning the road across the lake—the signal which the peasants invariably wait for. Until some one amongst them has had a ducking, they will not give up this convenient short cut to and from their homes. On the branches of the elm-trees, too, there was great cawing and flapping of wings. The big grey crows were preparing to build their nests: only two or three of them did not caw, and did not flap their wings, for they were lying cold and stiff on the ground beneath the trees. The spring had come too late for them! As for the chaffinches and sparrows, who had no dignity to preserve, they flew about tumultuously, chirping and singing with the whole strength of their little throats—singing over the winter's departure, and singing in the glories of spring-time.

Ah, but it is all very well to talk about birds and flowers, and to dwell upon sparrows and daisies! Spring is a season of poetry, certainly, but it has its prosaic side

too—at least, it has in Poland. When the sun shines out with a sudden warmth, and the snow begins melting with a rush, the natural consequence is, in that land of rich, soft earth, and scanty pavements and primitive roads, that streets and highways and byways become alike flooded, and wellnigh impassable. The consequence, in short, of that poetical burst of spring, is a very unpoetical state of slushy mud. Whoever is wise, and can choose for himself, will avoid leaving the precincts of his dwelling-place during this period, until nature has calmed and settled down a little into normal existence. It is small consolation, when you are sticking in the middle of a muddy road, with the liquid mire pouring in at the sides of your vehicle—it is a very poor consolation indeed, to hear the birds singing gaily on the bushes alongside, and to see the fresh grass sprouting under the hedgerows. Not all the beauties of spring will at moments like these reconcile you to the inconveniences which it brings in its train. This, of course, only the opinion of a prejudiced outsider; everything that one has been born and bred up to from childhood becomes natural, perhaps congenial—even mud. The Poles certainly do not trouble themselves much about such a trifling inconvenience. If the road is bad—well, they will just have to put in four horses instead of two, and drive three hours instead of one. A Pole will rarely let the bad state of the roads stand in the way of important business, and never in the way of any pleasure, however unimportant. Even though they are free to choose for themselves, they are not wise enough, or are perhaps too wise, to put themselves out of their way on account of the mud.

The 2d of April was the feast-day of a personage of importance,

no less than the universal favourite of that neighbourhood, old Boradembiski; and many carriages were wending their way that forenoon towards Boradembiski's country residence, which country residence was, in fact, a group of farm-buildings, with a very modest dwelling-house attached to it. This celebration of *fête*-days is a very important feature in Polish social life. These days are landmarks in the year, the periods which can be looked forward to as occasions when one will with certainty meet all one's friends and most of one's acquaintances—a species of impromptu patriarchal gathering, when people come to mark their esteem or affection for the to-be-fêted personage, ready to take their part in any gaiety which may be a-going, and where everybody is sure of a warm welcome. There is always an uncertainty hovering about these patriarchal gatherings, quite different from the formal etiquette of invited parties—a pleasing uncertainty as to the number of guests that may eventually turn up, which must be particularly pleasing to the house-keeper, who is expected to entertain them, and who must be prepared for the contingency of fifty people to feed, as well as the possibility that only five may appear. Chance determines everything, and also to a great extent the popularity or importance of the individual in question. As a matter of course, whoever comes to such a gathering is not allowed to get away before evening—usually not before next morning; and into this space of time are crammed more meals than are usually eaten in three days of ordinary life. After the solemn dinner—the only regular meal of the day—other refectations of nondescript nature, and composed chiefly of the dinner remains, are served at irregular intervals of two and three hours. As soon as lights are lit,

dancing begins among the young people. No music has been provided; everything is left to chance here too. Then when people begin talking of going, the host invariably presses everybody warmly to stay for the night, offering—with a noble disregard to the size of his house and the number of his guests—to put them all up indiscriminately. After all, the size of the house does not affect the matter much; it is arranged in the following simple manner: All the beds in the house are given up to the ladies, and all the sofas and chairs to the old gentlemen; as for those who remain over after this allotment—the young men—they are accommodated by straw being laid down on the floor of the largest room in the house, after the good old mediæval fashion, and invited to take their repose on this rustic couch.

As I have said, there were many carriages wending their way through the mud on this particular feast-day in question; from all the points of the compass they were making towards Blotów. The air was blowing mildly about with a delicious suggestion of newly-sprung-up flower-life in its breath, and, though the snow had not yet been gone many days, fragrant with violets. There were great patches of them, purple patches, among the fresh grass at the roadside; violets straggling out from the shade of the woods which skirted the road in this direction; and further in, under the shadows of the oak-trees, and between the still leafless bushes, the snowdrops had shot up with their stiff-pointed green sheaths, piercing through the fallen brown leaves, crumbling and dead now—the leaves which had been green on the branches last summer.

Blotów stood on a little elevation; not much of an elevation, not deserving more than the name of a small hillock, but still steep enough,

and with so sharp a turn, as to make those forty yards or so of ascent a very bad pull for the horses, and a trying moment for a nervous person. The successive batches of visitors getting dragged up the hillock to-day, were cheered and encouraged at the moment of their trial by the inspiring sight of old Boradembki standing on the steps of his house, and waving them on to victory with a large blue cotton pocket-handkerchief. Good old Boradembki! He had lived thirty years in this place; had been tugged up this hill, and seen his friends tugged up, during thirty years; had been at intervals upset in taking that sharp turn, and likewise seen many of his friends upset times innumerable; and yet never had the necessity struck him of bettering the condition of existing things. This road had been the same for fifty or sixty years; it had done for other men before him, so why should it not do for him?

This farm of Blotów, like almost all the land in the neighbourhood, belonged to the rich Prince R——; but Boradembki had lived there so long that he almost felt as if it belonged to him. No one could imagine Blotów without Boradembki, or Boradembki without Blotów. And yet there had been a time, now some ten years ago, when it seemed as if Blotów and its master were to part company. Prince R——bethought himself in an evil hour of raising all his rents. He sent for Boradembki and told him that either he must leave the farm or pay nearly double the rent he had been paying hitherto. To this Boradembki demurred, saying that such a sum was out of his reach. "Then if you won't pay it the Jew will do so," said the noble Prince, opening the door of the apartment and calling out to a ragged Hebrew outside, "Say, Jew, how much will you give?"

"Four thousand!" shrieked out the unclean wretch, holding up that number of filthy fingers.

Old Boradembki drew up his gigantic figure proudly to its full height. "If the Jew gives four thousand, then so will I."

"That's right," said the Prince; "then you keep the farm," and he held out his hand to him.

But Boradembki did not take the proffered hand; he did something quite unusual for him—he put both his huge hands behind his broad back, and bowing coldly to his landlord, left the room.

The danger of that one sharp turn once over, the guests were received by Boradembki at the door in his most hospitable style. He was delighted to see everybody, not only as a form of speech, but really and truly delighted. His face was beaming with even more than its ordinary cheerfulness, his slaps on the back were more resounding, and his squeezings of fingers if possible more annihilating, than usual.

An Englishman will not invite his friends unless he can afford to entertain them, and no one can say that he is not right. The Pole does not calculate so far. He is always delighted to see his friends whether he can afford it or not, and his friends will always come uninvited to see him, without contemplating the possibility of their visits being an inconvenience. He would rather scrimp himself for weeks, than forego the pleasure of seeing his friends around him.

"Ah, F——! I knew you would come early; so glad to see you looking so well. Your bay took the hill capitally. What do you say to this splendid weather? The very thing we wanted for the oats." "God bless you, my son! so you have found it worth your while to ride out from Rzeszów for old Boradembki's feast-day?" "Your most humble servant, Countess; I kiss

your hand. You are enjoying this lovely weather; the sunshine makes me feel quite young again." "Ah, here comes D——!" as a vehicle, deeply coated with mud, struggles up the hill. "I told you the road from G—— was in capital condition. A little soft? Oh, but that will mend soon! a fault on the right side; doesn't batter the horses' legs." "Ah, here is a surprise! actually Ledinski in person. Welcome to my roof!" Ledinski was an old gentleman, the retired post-master of Rzeszów. Although hardly ranking among the country gentry, yet he was a good friend and old schoolfellow of Borademb-ski, who in his large-hearted sympathies counted his friends in all ranks of life. He was never seen otherwise than dressed in black from head to foot, whiskers and hair dyed black to match. It was a well-known fact, one which Ledinski himself talked of with pride, that he had never been photographed, never received a telegram, and never seen a railway. He was, as has been said, a very good friend of Borademb-ski's, but during the last twenty years had never found time to drive out as far as Blotów. His emotions were easily stirred, whether for pleasure or for pain, and invariably took the form, rather inconvenient for a man, of dissolving into tears. At this moment, as he stands on the door-step in his coal-black suit, holding Borademb-ski's hand, two large tears are rolling heavily down his cheeks; he tries to bring out some flowery speech about old friendship and spring blossoms, but chokes in the middle, and has to stop.

"All right; yes, I know, my dear old brother," says Borademb-ski, in his cheery voice. "Get along with you into the house, Iza will take charge of you all. I see another carriage coming."

The lady referred to by the name

of Iza was Borademb-ski's married daughter (for Borademb-ski has had a wife once, but she has died thirty years or so ago). While her father was putting the visitors through a first phase of reception on the door-steps, Iza was putting others through a second one in the drawing-room within—a middle-sized, low-roofed room, rather out of proportion to the large company which is filling it more at every minute. Gentlemen in evening dress (for Poles are always fond of rushing into evening dress on the smallest provocation), a fair proportion of the older ones attired, like their host, in the national costume—high boots, braided cloth coats, something flapping from their shoulders rather like wings, embroidered gold belts wound several times round their waists, and a short sword at their side; all talking together in groups, or talking and smoking together in the adjoining room; in general, all keeping together, apart from the ladies. The ladies in every degree of toilet, elegant and inelegant—morning toilets, visiting toilets, travelling toilets, and demi-toilets. There is no rule for feast-days—everybody has put on what is most convenient, and nobody looks out of place. Some two or three prudent young ladies, who have had their eyes open to the probability of a dance in the evening, have brought an old ball-dress with them; and when the lights are lit to-night, they will reap the fruits of their foresight by suddenly appearing in full though faded state, eclipsing their less far-seeing or simpler-minded sisters. At present they are all sitting with pale kid-gloves on their hands, and all talking—conversation being the only amusement provided; there are fifty different streams of conversation going on at once. No one will dream of proposing any other entertainment

as long as daylight lasts; there are no books to be examined, no photographs to be looked at, nobody will ask for a round game. Oh, I beg pardon—there are two books upon a side table in the room, but so covered with dust that it is not likely any one will feel inclined to open them. One of them is a magnificently-illustrated and handsomely-bound volume of Mickiewicz's Poems—the only true poet that ever lived, if you will believe the Poles; the other an old bound-up French fashion-paper. The dust on the tables, and on the two solitary books, is amply kept in countenance by the numberless cobwebs in the corners of the room and the smudges on the window-panes.

It is now twelve o'clock, and the company will sit like this till eight, till they begin to dance, with the diversity of two lengthy meals in the next room, with nothing to do but to talk to each other; and they will not only appear well amused, but be well amused in reality—the idea of any other livelier form of amusement never having entered their heads. There is an atmosphere of flowing talk and laughter, of good-humour, of affectation, of slight flirtation—flirtation, that is to say, with the solitary men who now and then stray into the phalanxes of the ladies: quite inoffensive, and not meaning much; just little tricks, and smiles and glances; little sharp speeches, which are supposed to be witty—little artificial coynesses, which are supposed to be fascinating. I ought to have said that there is also an atmosphere of violets: when violets are blowing outside, they always find their way into our houses. Many of the ladies to-day have bunches of them stuck in their dresses or in their hair. Comtesse Halka holds a large bouquet of mingled violets and snowdrops in

her hand, and she bends over them now and then, or holds them up to her face as she talks.

It is an essentially Polish society which is assembled here to-day; there are only three uniforms in the room, the Colonel, Langenfeld, and Otto. A fourth uniform which is usually present at all such meetings in the neighbourhood is to-day conspicuous by its absence—Captain Kreislich has found it convenient to-day to have another engagement, though he cannot help being aware that Comtesse Halka is to be here. Poles have a very great sense of hospitality, but they have also a great sense of nationality; and, as a rule, the Austrian officers lying in Polish garrisons do not mix much in the country society of the neighbourhood. By some intuition they feel, or fancy, that their presence is not particularly desired; on which side exactly the fault lies is not easy to determine.

There are no more carriages coming now, and old Boradembski has joined his company inside. He goes about the room from one person to the other in a friendly but aimless fashion, patting the young men on the back, shaking hands with the old ones, kissing the hands of ladies both young and old, distributing compliments, and saying cheerful things to everybody. All that the neighbourhood has to show of families is here to-day; a very fair assemblage, it must be said. There is a lady with a profile like a snipe, Madame H——, the wife of the doctor at Rzeszów; she never talks without smiling blandly, and to-day she has her hair so disposed as to produce the effect of a pheasant's tail, which helps to carry out the general idea of ornithology. If you watch her *coiffure* for a few minutes, and have got a vivid imagination, you could fancy that the tail is going to spread itself, pre-

paratory to flight. The old gentleman with the great likeness to Napoleon III. is also a notability. His son, like his father, but less like Napoleon, with the addition of red hair and a hump, is a good pianist, and his services will be required by-and-by. The old lady with the white hair and the fresh complexion has been a celebrity in her day for her beauty: she has one beauty still remaining, her perfectly-shaped and ivory-white hand; and though she is past sixty, she has not got out of the habit of toying with her fan gracefully. She is married to her third husband, a small proprietor in the neighbourhood. Her marriages have gone downhill, it must be said: her first husband was Prince G—, her second one Count K—, and her third is plain Mr L—, with nothing to recommend him in any way, one would think, to the *ci-devant* beauty, not even a good temper. Madame L— still manages to attract men in spite of her venerable age; just now there are only two gentlemen talking to the ladies, and one of them is talking to her. The other is Langenfeld, and he is devoting himself to the pretty niece of Boradembki, dark-haired and blue-eyed, whose chief charm lies in the masterly grace with which she moves her head, and “manages” her arms and shoulders. The gentleman who is talking to the *ci-devant* beauty is Mr Z—, a tall, broad-shouldered, black-haired man, with very full red lips, an eyeglass, and an unpleasant smile. He is a gentleman of good old family and fortune, and doubtful moral character, and is therefore the most coveted *parti* in the neighbourhood, as he is himself very well aware; for which reason he makes himself very precious in young ladies’ society, and usually devotes his valuable attentions to those who are safely ensconced in the

bonds of matrimony. I could not attempt to describe a quarter of the company present; there were ladies of all degrees of good and bad looks, and gentlemen of all degrees of birth and breeding. The one amongst the young men the most striking for his *distingué* carriage and easy manners was X—, a young man belonging to an ultra-Polish family of ancient lineage; in outward appearance, manners, and even dress, decidedly the flower of the flock; a man of fashion, who in great degree gave the *ton* in this neighbourhood, and who anywhere would strike one as essentially aristocratic-looking.

Dinner is approaching now: the mistress of the house has been bustling in and out with a large bunch of keys; various messages have been brought to her by small barefooted girls, and whispered into her ear mysteriously; the polished table, round which some of the ladies were sitting, has been carried out, probably to be pressed into the service in the dining-room. At last the moment has come; no formal announcement of dinner, but it is generally understood that dinner is ready. A minute before, the head-servant (I cannot call him butler or footman) has come into the room with a large bottle in his hand, containing some sort of strong home-made *wódki*, or spirits; and as he puts it down on the pianoforte, where an array of little glasses have been standing all along, he mentions, in an offhand manner, that the soup is ready to be served. He is in his best clothes to-day; not exactly livery; if the truth is to be told, the upper part is an old military *blouse*—the undress uniform, bought second or third hand from some Jew presumably—with the military facings taken off, and silver livery-buttons, of divers sizes and shapes, sewn down the front of it. All the gentlemen troop towards the piano, and Borademb-

ski pours out a glassful for each of his friends ; then he offers his arm to Countess Przeszechowska, the other gentlemen offer their arms to the other ladies, without much attention to rank or precedence, and they all stream into the dining-room. They are fully fifty people sitting down to table ; and here, as in the drawing-room, the two sexes are apart—each gentleman, on entering, has dropped his lady, and moved down to the lower part of the board ; neither does the mistress of the house sit at the head of the table, as every lady should do in her own house. The old Countess is in the place of honour ; the two ladies next in importance on each side of her, and so on ; so that, by this arrangement, unless a lady be hopelessly insignificant, she has not got the chance of having a male creature to talk to during dinner. Most people find nothing odd or undesirable in this arrangement, and are content with this division of the sexes as prescribed by national custom ; but Langenfeld, although half a Pole, does not approve of all Polish habits, and has managed to put himself at the extremity of the gentleman line opposite, and thus will be able to continue his little flirtation with Boradembaski's pretty niece, who sits beside him. The only one amongst the gentlemen who was placed contrary to Polish etiquette was Otto ; he had been put in among the ladies, with Comtesse Halka to his right and Madame H—— to his left. How this had come to pass, whether by free-will or mere accident, was not evident. It did not much look like the former ; for he could hardly have placed himself there for the sake of the snipe-like lady to his left ; and yet he talked more to her than to the Comtesse. But he did not talk much to anybody, and ate very little, refusing every second

dish, but never refusing wine. Of course Otto's abnormal position was remarked upon by people, and talked about. No one was very much surprised at it, though, for his name had been heard pretty frequently mentioned in connection with that of Comtesse Halka, and perhaps some of them had noticed how old Boradembaski had given Otto a private shove into his present position.

"How pale Comtesse Halka is looking to-day !" the *ci-devant* beauty is saying to her neighbour, also an elderly lady, who has never been a beauty in her best days, and who has never been married,— "quite careworn—ever so much older than last year."

"Ah, yes, we all know how love wears and tears," remarks the other lady, sagaciously.

Madame L—— fingers her fork gracefully with her right hand and laughs softly to herself, the prettiest little beauty-laugh, with which, forty years ago, she used to captivate people ; perhaps she is thinking that her own very ample experience of love has not worn and torn her much. "I do not think," she remarks presently, "that the Comtesse would allow her emotions to prey upon her to the extent of injuring her looks ; she is far too wise for that."

The advent of the next dish interrupts these comments upon Halka's appearance. The next dish is something very complicated, and cut up very small, and very much overdone, and served in large shells. In its origin—that is, before it was cooked, when it stood only on paper—it may have been a light French dish, but under the hands of the Polish *maître de cuisine*, it has lost all its Frenchness and its lightness. It is considered necessary, on occasions like the present, to have an immensely long *menu*, the dishes following each

other with immense pauses between—either well-cooked national dishes, which the Poles delight in, but which to the palate of a stranger are repugnant, or ill-cooked imitations of French or German recipes. Boradembki's *menu* to-day is decidedly out of proportion to the talents of his cook, and to his style of living ; but Poles, even the best and most simple-minded of them, have always a hankering after appearing higher or richer than they are, and will always ape, in their own slipshod, through-other fashion, whatever they have seen done elsewhere, however different the relative positions. If there is too much pretension about the cookery, the same certainly cannot be said of the arrangements of the dinner-table, or dinner-tables, for it consists of five or six tables of different shapes and different heights pushed together. The fine white damask table-cloth has to make several steps up and down hill, according to the need of the moment, and there is a danger of the bottles and glasses slipping down over the deceitful surface. The white damask cloth is, despite a few undarned holes, the only fine or valuable thing about the table—except, perhaps, two or three undoubtedly rare china plates, which many an English *connoisseur* in china would be glad to count in his collection, but which here are unappreciated, and have taken their place among the variously shaped and variously coloured, also sometimes variously chipped, cracked, or broken, crockery which covers the rest of the board. No flowers are on the table, no glass troughs, no dainty little *menu*-cards, no lamps or candles, of course, for it is broad daylight ; but the centre of the table is well filled, all the same. There are platters with huge loaves of home-baked bread, and excellent bread it is, cut in thick slices ; and

there are dishes of fresh ewe-milk cheese or butter between every third and fourth person. There is a running accompaniment of butter-eating kept up during the whole meal ; in the pauses all the company eat butter on their bread or mix it indiscriminately with the dishes, just as the spirit moves them—every one, of course, helping him or her self with the knife they are eating with. The salt-cellars on the table are spoonless, and the servants' hands gloveless.

The shells, after a long interval, have been succeeded by a truly national dish, ox-tongue, cooked in a sweet sauce of almonds and raisins. This dish, which would be a severe trial to any British palate, is by the Poles considered to be an immense success to-day, and they are all applying themselves to it with praiseworthy assiduity : the two ladies next to the mistress of the house are congratulating her on this triumph of culinary art ; the old Postmaster, in a voice husky with emotion, says something to Boradembki about the happiness of having such an excellent housekeeper ; the pretty niece is talking very demurely to Langenfeld, and delicately carrying raisins to her mouth on the point of her knife. Everybody is eating with their knives, of course, both gentlemen and ladies ; but this is so generally done all over Germany and Austria, that it is hardly a matter for remark ; and surely only a person of extra sickly fastidiousness would be startled by it. Have I not witnessed countless individuals, moving in the best society, practising this feat with a skill verging on a juggler's art !

Mr Z—— is one of those who have taken the largest helping of the famed Polish tongue, and he is eating it with a relish which is very apparent on his unpleasant face. "I don't know when I have eaten

better tongue," remarks he to his humpbacked neighbour, while carefully mopping up the dregs of the sweet sauce with pieces of bread-crumbs, and swallowing them with enjoyment.

"Why, Bodenbach," exclaims the little humpback, leaning across the table—"why are you not eating?"

"Hate sweet things," is the laconic rejoinder.

"Doesn't seem in a very sweet humour himself," remarks the little man, aside to Z——; "and I am sure he ought to be so, lucky fellow as he is."

Z—— leans back in his chair, and picks his teeth. "Ha! you call him lucky fellow; I am not so sure about that," he drawls, opening his full lips to a disagreeable smile.

"Not lucky! why, what more do you want? She is the best *parti* within fifty miles. Oh, he is a very lucky fellow!" and the little hunchback heaves a deep sigh, and feels a momentary pang of jealousy for every one who has not got a hump, and not got red hair.

"Oh, if he did get her, he would be lucky of course," answers Z——, half closing his eyes, and regarding Otto with a critical look. "Not being a Pole is of course a great objection, and an officer too."

"Yes, but he is a good-looking man, of good family, and, they say, will have some money. The Comtesse is no longer quite young, she could not do better than take him. You see how completely he has run that other fellow off the course."

"Oh, I don't deny that he is better than that enormous captain with the black eyes. It would have been too much ignominy for a *Przeszechowska* to marry a man whose money had been made by his father's success in soap-boiling. This one at least looks like a gentleman. Not a bad-looking fellow," continues Z——, conde-

scendingly, still examining Otto from under his half-closed eyelids—"not bad-looking. Too fair, of course, for a man; but there are other not bad-looking men of good family, who *are* Poles, and who *have* got their money already, whom they would have been very glad to get,—yes, very glad," he repeats, looking down with a meditative air at a handsome emerald ring cut with his arms, which is flashing on his plump, cushiony white hand, while a self-conscious smile plays round his full lips.

"Oh, no doubt, no doubt," the little hunchback hastens to say, "but one has to be content with what one can get; and if they are wise, they will not go on waiting for unattainable Don Juans."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughs Z——, leaning back in his chair. This is just the sort of compliment best calculated to flatter his particular phase of vanity. "You are a very amusing fellow, *Boguslaw*!" And the little hunchback reaps the fruit of his well-timed pleasantry, for Z—— on the spot invites him to dinner for the middle of next week. The excellent quality of Z——'s dinner-wines are well known, and the little red-haired hunchback jumps at the invitation with great alacrity, and congratulates himself on his lucky hit. After that, the two men, the flattered and the flatterer, go on talking, very well pleased with each other. "To return to what we were saying before," continues Z——, with an air of immense affability; "no doubt the Comtesse would be quite right in accepting the man; everybody must take what they can get, as you say—ha, ha, ha!—only I don't think it looks much like it."

"I beg your pardon; I should say it looks remarkably like it," interposes the hunchback.

"You think so? Then what do you say to a little bet?"

The hunchback was delighted at the idea of a little bet.

"A dozen of champagne shall it be? I to pay you one dozen if he proposes and is accepted at any time this year after to-day; two dozen if he proposes to-night and is accepted."

"Yes, capital! very good conditions. So that is settled," assents the hunchback, rubbing his hands. "I shall hope for my two dozen. I shall have my eyes open to-night when I am playing. Such things often come off during dancing."

By this time the unconscious object of the bet, sitting opposite, was rising into higher spirits. When a man goes on persistently refusing solid food, and only keeping to liquid, his spirits usually rise for the moment. Otto could stand a good deal in this way; his head was perfectly clear, but his manner and talk were gaining a little in animation. Just now he is pouring out some water attentively for Halka, and pressing her to let him mix some wine with it, which she declines with much grace and decision. Polish ladies, as a rule, never drink wine; it is considered indelicate, unfeminine, &c., just as they think it unladylike to take a long walk, or to shake hands with a man; and they make an edifying fuss about taking a dose of wine which an Englishwoman would consider homœopathically small. Otto having failed with the Comtesse, turns to his other neighbour, and attempts to induce her to overcome her national prejudices.

"Oh no, *please* not," exclaims this lady, putting her hand over her glass with a look of real terror in her face. "I should be *so* ill if I took a drop, I know. I should probably have to lie down for the rest of the day." Thus baffled on all sides, Otto pours out a full tumbler for himself and drinks it off at a draught, after which he

turns to Madame H——, and pays her some rather reckless compliments on the becomingness of her *coiffure*.

Madame H—— was a little startled, but more flattered.

"Have you got any news from your family, and from your brother?" she inquired, very sweetly, wishing to say something agreeable in her turn.

"No, I don't often hear from them—our family are not very good correspondents; they are getting on pretty much as usual, no doubt."

"Oh, but you should make your brother write to you oftener," said Madame H——. "He is such a superior man, and I always think it so sad when brothers get estranged in that way."

"Well, but we cannot always remain together like fowls in one farmyard," said Otto, flippantly. "And what could he write to me about? There never is anything of any interest happening at Steinbühl; it is always the same humdrum sort of life. His letters, if he wrote oftener, would probably be no end of a bore."

To this the snipe-like lady, not having an answer ready, smiled blandly at Otto, and their conversation dropped.

The meal proceeded on its appointed course; after the boiled and minced meats follow the sweet dishes, and after the sweet dishes the roasts. Boradembski is moving about round the table, encouraging people to eat, and filling up glasses; he stops to pay a compliment to the *ci-devant* beauty, she talks up to him smilingly for a minute; then he passes on, strokes his niece on the head, shakes his finger playfully at Langenfeld, pats the little hunchback encouragingly on the least deformed shoulder. "That's right, Zygmunt! always look after the ladies," he says, nodding approving-

ly at a gentleman who has been elegantly transferring a large slice of ham from his own plate to that of a lady two places off, who has come too short in the helping. "Ah, Colonel," as he reaches Colonel Fornay's place, "do let me give you some of this wine. Real Tokayer, I assure you—got it from an excellent friend of mine;" and before the Colonel has time to offer resistance, his glass is filled up with Boradembki's "*real Tokayer*," which, as he well knew, was like most "*real Tokayer*" drunk in Poland, composed of two-thirds spirits and one-third sugar. "You will find it excellent, I assure you," Boradembki says, confidently; "and I know you are a *connoisseur*."

"Well done, X——!" exclaims the genial host, presently, coming round to the other side of the table, where the *distingué* young man is carrying on a graceful French conversation with his neighbour. Poles always prefer talking French when unable to employ their own tongue. Almost all of them know German, but their sense of nationality forbids their using it, and so they rather talk bad French than good German. X——, however, is an exception; he is talking French fluently, with an almost Parisian accent. "Well done, X——! That is the sort of appetite I used to have when I was young."

"La ressemblance me fait trop d'honneur," returns the flower of the flock, while lightly disposing the picked bones of his chicken in an artistic circle *outside* his plate on the fine damask table-cloth, so as to make room for a second helping of the excellent fowl which he sees approaching him.

It must here be alleged, in excuse for X——, that Polish helpings are on a large scale. You do not, as at an English dinner-party, get the alternative of a snipe's leg, or the transparent shaving of a pheasant's

breast, offered you by a pompous footman. You can have a fowl and a half if you like, and welcome; but as no plate can be expected to contain that amount of bones, and if a convenient dog is not at hand, what else is a man to do but put his bones on the table-cloth?

I beg to call to mind that I am not writing of last century, nor of the lower or middle classes; I am writing of the Polish landed gentry of the present day, titled and untitled, who, many of them, can count their ancestors by centuries back and boast of sixteen quarterings to their arms—of men both of fortune and position, but who have never left their narrow circle, and have not learnt, as contact with other nations would have taught them, how far back they are as regards civilisation. I should not venture to invent such things, and certainly should not write them if I had not seen them with my own eyes. After all, when you are at Rome you must do like the Romans; not quite literally in this case, let us hope, but there is nothing like taking people and things as you find them. In this age of social conventionality, and these days of stereotyped etiquette, it is refreshing to meet with the large-hearted hospitality of the Poles—even though it be mixed up with countless little touches of affectation (the sort of affectation which springs from want of knowledge of the world) on the women's side, and much want of order and method, to put it as mildly as possible, on the part of both sexes. Let us be just, and reflect that most likely our great-great-great-grandfathers did not conduct themselves very differently at table from the way Boradembki and his guests are doing now—and yet, for all that, our ancestors were gentlemen (at least those of some of us were); and that in all probability Bora-

dembbski's great-great-grand-children will sit at table and eat their food much in the same way that we English do now. Civilisation is a fine thing in its way, a pleasant thing and a delightful thing, a thing none of us would willingly forego; but in its course of polishing and planing it will sometimes polish off and plane away some of the finer edges of our kindest instincts, and perhaps by the time that Boradembbski's great-great-grandchildren have learnt how to manage their knives and forks, they will no longer be the open-handed, open-hearted men, whose peculiarities may provoke our smiles, but whose genial kindness cannot fail to touch us.

The last of the wearisome fourteen dishes has been successfully disposed of, but the dinner is not near its end yet. The room is growing hot and close, as is only natural under the combined influences of fifty people, fourteen dishes, and countless violets. Z—— is leaning back in his chair looking rather overpowered, and his *bon-vivant* face a good deal flushed; the ladies who have got fans are fanning themselves violently—those who have not, are seeking refreshment in their raspberry ice. The great feature of the dinner is still to come—the toasts; this antiquated habit being a special crotchet of old Boradembbski's. There was no escaping from them, no possibility of curtailing them; every imaginable sort of toast which by hook or by crook could be pressed into the service must be drunk through in turn. The old Napoleon-like gentleman rises to his feet to give Boradembbski's health. There has been a slight indecision beforehand as to who should propose this most important toast. Somebody had suggested Count Przeszechowski; but the Count is of a retiring disposition, and dislikes putting himself

forward, for which reason he wanted to shuffle off the honour on to the old Postmaster; but the old Postmaster was far too much overcome by his emotions to attempt anything of the kind, and entreated his neighbour Z—— to take the task off his hands. Z—— was not at all overcome by his emotions, but it was against his principles to do anything which involved any trouble, more especially immediately after dinner; so, finally, the office was handed over to Mr V——, who is not timid, not hampered with emotions, does not mind taking trouble, and who, in this unlike Napoleon III., speaks easily and well. Conversations are hushed and broken off.

"My friends," begins Mr V——, in his well-pitched tones, "we are all here to-day assembled on a joyful occasion; most of us have been here assembled on like occasions often before." Boradembbski lays down his spoon and prepares to listen attentively; he knows that his own health is going to be proposed, but there is not the faintest shade of self-consciousness on his honest face, only a broad smile of undisguised pleasure as he keeps his eyes fixed on the speaker, and nods his head approvingly from time to time.

"Some of us are old friends of our beloved host, whose friendship dates from the cradle; others among us are new friends, but not for that the less warmly received by him. We are all, whether young or old, countrymen of his or strangers, his true friends, and we have all come here to-day with one purpose. Some of us have left our fields and our houses, some of us have put aside our business for the day; the gallant Colonel has abandoned his soldiers, and our honoured friend the Postmaster has torn himself away from his native town for the first time these twenty years."

At the allusion to strangers, several glances are directed towards Otto, the most conspicuous stranger there to-day; at the mention of abandoning soldiers, the Colonel frowns instinctively; and as the Postmaster is referred to, a gentle sob is heard from his direction. Inspired by these signs, Mr V— proceeds, rising into oratorical interrogation, as Poles invariably do when in the warmth of eloquence.

"Would it not be unnecessary, my friends, and almost impossible, to enumerate all the benefits, good services, and marks of friendship which we have all received from our beloved host? Have we not all, as we sit here, something which we owe to him? Has he not stood by at our baptism or blessed our nuptials? consoled us in our afflictions? reconciled us in our quarrels? Has he not guided us in the management of our fortunes? helped us to sow and reap our fields? Has he not laughed with us when we laughed, and wept with us when we have wept? Is it not a family feast we are celebrating to-day? for are we not all related to him by the ties of gratitude and friendship? Is he not the friend, the brother, the benefactor, the—the—" as the orator strives to grasp a climax—"the Father of us all?"—this with an immense point of interrogation, and succeeded by deafening cheers. Old Boradembki pretends to stop his ears, but really is delighted. "Yes, my friends, I see you all agree with me; I have interpreted your sentiments aright, and you will join me in emptying this glass to the health of our much-beloved host, wishing him all health and happiness, and that he may live and be beloved for many years to come. The health of our host!"—the orator raises his glass to his lips, all the gentlemen rise to their feet—"the health of our host, BORADEMSKI!"

The glasses are clinked together, even the ladies make a graceful but fictitious show of joining in the toast. Old Boradembki is on the summit of good-humoured delight. As soon as calmness is restored, Boradembki rises and returns thanks to his friends, without any attempt at disclaiming the praises so lavishly bestowed on him. Old Boradembki's voice is quite steady, but perhaps just a little deeper than usual. He does not speak so fluently as Mr V—, but they all understand what he wants them to understand. He thanks all his friends in general for their warmly-expressed attachment, and addresses his thanks in particular to Colonel Fornay, whose presence here to-day can be taken as a sign of the good understanding existing between his Majesty the Emperor of Austria and his Polish subjects.

Upon this, Colonel Fornay cannot do less than give the health of the whole Polish nation, which he, with evasive tact, defines generally as a nation which has produced so many brilliant soldiers; at which compliment several of the gentlemen who had looked rather dark at the mention of his Majesty the Emperor of Austria brighten up again. Naturally the Colonel's speech elicits a corresponding one from some one else, in which the Austrian nation is complimented in return; upon which the Colonel resignedly rises to his feet a second time, and launches into another toast,—this time one chosen from a safe distance, which can have no danger of again recoiling upon himself—the success of the crops.

The crops somehow or other lead to the Vienna Exhibition; the Vienna Exhibition is made to lead to an unfortunate young man who, it is known, has sent some samples of home-made brandy, as proofs of Polish industry, to the Exhibition;

the young man, pressed on by some rather lively nudges from his two neighbours, rises to his feet, pale with terror, heartily regretting that he had ever been fool enough to send anything to the Exhibition, and looking about wildly for somebody on whom to throw the observation of the company. His eye alights on the old Postmaster opposite, who is regarding him with a moist expression: like a drowning man clutching at a straw, he, with an effort, brings out the Postmaster's health.

The old Postmaster gets up, says something inaudible, and sinks down again, with tears streaming over his cheeks. The people at the end of the table have not understood a word; but his nearest neighbours, having caught up his intention, repeat "The Ladies," and the ladies' health is drunk, each one of the fair sex present taking the compliment as personal, and looking becomingly abashed in proportion to the claims which she thinks herself entitled to put forward to public admiration. As a matter of course, as a right which pertains to him naturally, the young man with the chicken-bones and the Parisian accent gets up very readily, looking and feeling just the right sort of man to return thanks for the ladies; and does so in a well-turned speech, pronounced in the best of Polish, and happily intermixed with French expressions.

This toast is followed by another, and that by another, and so on, general and personal relieving each other: the Church and the State; Mr B——; Madame O——, the *ci-devant* beauty, with her husband (only the third, not the two others); somebody's grandmother, and somebody else's great-grandchild, who had only just seen the light of day, &c., &c., &c., in endless variety. The gentlemen are kept on their legs for the best part of an hour

—each toast in turn having full justice done to it in the emptying of glasses. Poles, as a nation, and in everyday life, are remarkably sober in their habits; one or two small *liqueur*-glasses of spirits is about all they take, and this before meals. Wine is rarely drunk in ordinary life, in many houses never appears on the table, except on occasions like the present; but then it must be confessed that, on occasions like the present, its consumption is very much out of proportion to the usual abstinence, and its effects much more perceptible than is the case in countries where wine-drinking forms part of the programme of daily life.

The stream of eloquence has run dry at last; every subject available for a toast has been exhausted; the gentlemen sink down into their chairs, the ladies begin to hope that escape from the hot room is approaching; the temperature of the apartment has risen to something near suffocation; fans are used with great vigour; every one among the company who has the least tendency to blood to the head is flushed; Otto has not got any tendency to blood to the head, but he is flushed nevertheless. It is not quite clear whose business it is to give the signal for rising: some of the ladies look inquiringly towards the mistress of the house, but she is engaged in an animated discourse with her neighbour, and does not see; some others glance towards Boradembaki, but his place is empty. He has risen and gone round to the head of the table, and is bending over the old Countess, whispering something in her ear. Countess Przaszechowska listens, she nods undecidedly, and exchanges a nervous glance with her husband. A minute later, old Boradembaki is back in his place, but he does not sit down, he remains standing, and fills up his

glass to the brim. Everybody is talking again, louder than before, and his movement is not remarked.

"My friends," he begins, in a loud, distinct tone, and then pauses, with his glass in his hand, so as to fix the attention of his audience. People look up surprised, and perhaps a little impatient; conversations are hushed again. Z——, who has already pushed his chair back from the table, and is leaning back lazily, with his hands in his pockets, gives a grunt of displeasure. Langenfeld has to stop fanning the pretty niece. The Colonel gives a weary sigh, and looks pathetically at his wife. The old Countess suddenly puts up her handkerchief to her face; her nearest neighbours think that she has become afflicted with nose-bleeding, and look at her compassionately. Otto is leaning back, with his arms folded, and with no expression at all visible on his face; and Halka is leaning forward, looking intently at a snow-drop which she has drawn out of her bouquet, and is pulling to pieces with her slim fingers, as if wrapt in the study of its botanical construction.

"My friends," repeats Borademb-ski, seeing that silence and attention are secured, "before the circle round this board is broken, I must call upon you to empty another glass of wine. I have one more toast to propose to you, and I am sure it is one which you will receive with warmest approbation. I have had many kind things said to me to-day by my dear friends; and I am anxious to prove myself worthy of their esteem by giving another proof of the true interest I take in you all. None of you, my friends, are, heaven be thanked, in need of consolation; none of you have quarrelled, neither does anybody present stand in need of my services as godfather." A burst of laughter; people are easily amused

after dinner. "But there is yet another task, which is the pleasantest of all, and I feel myself much honoured by being intrusted with it. We have drunk to-day the healths of the Poliah and Austrian nations, and I now call upon you to join with me in drinking to the happiness of two persons—one a daughter of our own country, the other a son of Austria—who are going to unite their lots. My humble efforts in helping to bring about this happy conclusion are fully rewarded by the satisfaction of being able to announce the auspicious event under my roof. Long life, health, and happiness," raising his voice still more, "to the happy bridal pair, Comtesse Halka Przeszechowska and Baron Otto Bodenbach—all health and happiness!"

"All health and happiness!" comes with a deafening burst from everybody round the table; the gentlemen rise in a body to drink the last toast. Otto is surrounded, overwhelmed; he has to fill his glass repeatedly to respond to everybody's congratulations. The old Postmaster's tears are dropping fast into his plate. The old Countess, now the crisis is safely passed, removes her handkerchief from her face and smiles across at her daughter; but Halka is not looking at her mother, she is holding up her bouquet to her face, and, but for that, people would see that she is pale, pale almost as the snow-drops which touch her cheek, pale as women sometimes are at the moment of their triumph.

"I never would have believed it," said Z—— to his hunchbacked neighbour. "I was taken by surprise, I confess; but I keep my champagne after all, for he won't propose to-night. It is a drawn bet."

"Yes," said the little hunchback, with a deep sigh, "you keep your champagne, but it is only by a fluke."

THE DEMISE OF THE KAISARBUND.

THE events now passing in Europe may well teach States the instability of alliances, and ought to warn Governments of the uncertain value of the overtures to new alliances which are now passing to and fro, with shifting course, among the Courts of Europe. Russia is the prime fountain of these overtures. She finds herself isolated; her old alliances are crumbling; her former allies, she believes, have deserted her; and, angrily and vengefully, yet upon grounds perfectly just as well as natural, she eagerly seeks new alliances to take the place of the old. Prince Gortschakoff, beaten by his hated rival, Prince Bismarck, is wrathfully recasting his policy; and the German and Hungarian peoples stand upon guard awaiting the issue, while their Governments are preparing to meet the storm of Pan-Slavic power and Muscovite intrigue.

While Germany lays a cable beneath the Baltic Sea to secure telegraphic communication with friendly Sweden beyond the reach of interruption by unfriendly and potentially hostile Denmark, the heir to the Russian throne pays a visit to the Swedish Court, to persuade King Oscar that the true interests of Scandinavia lie in a Muscovite alliance. Has not Germany robbed Denmark of half its territory and its only defensible frontier? and does not that upstart Empire, young and ambitious, maintain that the Vaterland must "still further go" and reach to the Sound? Sweden-Norway cannot stand alone in these times of great race-empires; let Scandinavia, then, trust to Russia, which has no racial claim or motive to incorporate it, rather than to Germany, which desires to swallow it up in a vast Teutonic Fatherland.

Russia, co-operating with the Scandinavian kingdoms, will withstand the northward progress of the overbearing Germans; and, as soon as fighting comes, will regain for Denmark her lost bulwarks of Duppel and Alsen. Highly plausible: but King Oscar, while he listened, must have remembered. Russia and Sweden are old antagonists. The Scandinavians, in Rurik, gave a founder and dynasty to Russia; but their war-feuds with Muscovy are older than those of any other Power save the Ottoman empire. Charles XII., by military skill, matched the power and thwarted the absorbing ambition of Peter the Great; but in subsequent times Russia tore Finland from Sweden by the sword, thereby acquiring the chief recruiting-ground for her navy. And in the far-reaching schemes of the Czars, has not the whole of the Scandinavian peninsula been marked out for Russian dominion, as the only means of securing for her navy an outlet from the Baltic? This is the first time a Czarewitch has paid a visit to the Court of Sweden. What messages were contemporaneously flashed thither from Berlin by the new-laid telegraph cable the future may disclose. Prosecuting his Scandinavian tour, the Czarewitch, while we write, is a guest at the Danish Court, and speaks to his father-in-law of coming revenge upon Germany.

Prince Gortschakoff also turns smilingly, with new-born friendship, to another and greater Power to which Russia has done many an ill turn. Russia aided Prussia in crushing the military power of France, and permitted her permanent enfeeblement by the loss of Alsace and Lorraine. Strasburg and Metz, the old portals and bul-

works of the country, have been lost, and by the possession of impregnable Metz the German power has been projected into the military heart of France. But there was a memorable alliance between a former Czar Alexander and France, and such an alliance has become more natural now. The alliance of Tilsit was for the divided empire of the world: the revived alliance would be for the restoration of France, and for the triumph of Russia over her Germanic neighbours. Slav and Celt would combine for the downfall of Teutonic power; and with that would fall the barriers between Russia and the Balkan peninsula. Despite the politic silence of her Government and the intelligent patience of her people, France pants, like a leopard in the leash, to spring upon the flank of Germany, and to fight a war of liberation as fiercely as the Germans themselves waged such a contest against the French under Napoleon the Great. Metz and Strasburg stand beckoning: lost bulwarks to be regained, trophies of defeat to be redeemed. Just as Russia can, without scruple, promise Duppel and Alsen to Denmark, she can promise to France not merely Alsace and Lorraine, but the realisation of her highest dream (already once accomplished) of the frontier of the Rhine. Such trafficking between France and Russia would be far too serious a matter to be allowed to transpire; yet among the news of the day from Paris (September 6) we read, "General Chanzy has arrived from St Petersburg. His arrival coincides with an unexpected visit to Paris of the Grand Duke Constantine."

Italy is proud to have her share of the conflicting overtures of rival Powers. Impotent of herself for belligerent aggression, she seeks to acquire the much-desired power from concert with stronger States. When the great Powers are in op-

posite camps, the lesser States rise into temporary potency, and acquire importance in the eyes of others as well as their own. They become strong by others' needs. The kingdom of Italy was made by the help of others, and midst the quarrels of its neighbours it schemes for further aggrandisement. The cold, calculating, and unscrupulous maxims of Macchiavelli still dominate Italian diplomacy. Any stick, says the proverb, will do to beat a dog—or an enemy; and the Italian Government, most of all, acts upon this maxim. Shrewder than Gortschakoff, it never counts upon gratitude—nor feels it; nor thinks of revenge except in the form of territory. It bargains for the present, and exacts its *quid pro quo* on the spot. And when it can, it takes a great deal more than was bargained for. In 1859 it parted with Nice and Savoy, but it got Lombardy, while adroitly forcing the hand of the French Emperor so as to get Tuscany and all the Duchies,—which Napoleon never meant. In like fashion it got Naples, and even the States of the Church; and finally, when its friend France, worsted in battle by the Germans, was fighting desperately for existence, the Italian Government, instead of helping its old ally, calmly took the opportunity to seize Rome and dethrone the Head of the Church.

Likewise, in the Prusso-Austrian war, Italy agreed to co-operate with Prussia; but there was no trusting to gratitude. The spoil was to be got at once; and Italy had to get it from her successful ally. The Austrian admiral played ducks and drakes with the Italian fleet at Lissa, while the Austrian Archduke pummelled the Italian army in the Quadrilateral; but Italy got Venetia all the same. Italy in 1866 trafficked with both sides, and only made short bargains, in order to be ready

for any still better bargain from the other side. It is a memorable fact, showing the wariness of Italian statesmen, that the offensive and defensive alliance with Prussia was timed to a day: it was to expire unless hostilities commenced in so many weeks; and Bismarck had to drive his king into the war,—the “good horse” (to use Bismarck’s somewhat irreverent phrase) being on this occasion “slow to take his fences.” More adroit diplomacy, combined with the ready employment of every available means of force, was never displayed than by the new-born kingdom of Italy. The *finesse* and strong, cold, ruthless policy of ancient Rome have never died out among the Italians. For centuries they lived and triumphed in the Church of Rome,—gleaming forth also from time to time among the Medicis and other temporal princes of the land; and now that there is a new Italian kingdom, they display themselves as of yore in the State.

Once more Macchiavelli is at work. Italy covets Trieste and the Dalmatian coast,—covets also the Southern Tyrol,—not to speak of Malta and some other places which it would be imprudent to mention all at once. *Italia irredenta*—unredeemed Italy—includes several very different parts. Southern Tyrol and the Swiss canton of the Ticino are claimed, because the people are, or speak, Italian. The Dalmatians are not Italian; but what of that? Italy would be more powerful if she possessed these territories. She cannot seize them of her own strength. She maintains an army far in excess of her finances, and builds the most powerful ironclad ships of war, armed with cannon of heavier calibre than any yet made at Woolwich: yet, with all that, Italy cannot of her own strength add a single acre to her territories, whether by land or among the

coveted adjoining isles. But the Italian Government is known to be open to all offers. It will employ both army and navy against its oldest friend or greatest benefactor if any other Power will make a higher bid for its alliance,—provided the security be good. Shylock could not weigh the “goodness” of Antonio and the probable value of his argosies at sea more warily than the Italian Government weighs the “bonds” now being tendered for her acceptance. Italian Ministers love to fish in troubled waters; so far as they can, they trouble the waters for the sake of their own fishing: and the adjoining provinces of Austria are the spoil which they scheme for amid the turmoil and shifting alliances which accompany the demise of the Kaisarbund. While that alliance lasted, Italian statesmanship had to bear itself meekly; the point of the German bayonet as well as the Austrian would meet it at Trieste. But now the Emperors have quarrelled: Russia wants an ally to crush Austria. Prince Gortschakoff is parleying with Italy; and the Crown Prince of Germany pays a visit to Rome.

The watering-places of Europe, of late years, have held a prominent part in the diplomacy and fortunes of the Continent. Plombières, to which the French Emperor resorted to recruit his failing bodily strength, was the scene of the secret Napoleonic bargain with Cavour, whereby Italy ceased to be a “geographical expression,” and which was the first step towards that revision of the map of Europe which ever loomed dreamily before the mind’s eye of Napoleon III., and ended so fatally for himself. A man of grand ideas, but lacking power for swift and persistent action, it was a characteristic close of his career when, dead-beat with bodily fati-

gue, he sank asleep amid the roar of artillery in the crisis of battle upon the heights of Gravelotte. Kissengen, a health-resort of the old but marvellously vigorous King William of Prussia, witnessed in 1870 the diplomatic *fracas* which produced the rupture with France, deliberately prepared for by Bismarck,—who by the Hohenzollern candidature for the Spanish throne, and otherwise, had irritated France up to the quarrelling-point, yet made stupid Europe believe that the quarrel was all of France's making. Two years afterwards Gastein witnessed a meeting of the three and sole remaining Emperors of Europe, and the birth of the Kaisarbund,—an alliance which was designed to ring the knell of the brave old Turkish empire.

The Alliance of the Three Emperors came upon Europe as a surprise,—and a highly momentous one. It revived the memories of the Holy Alliance, established among the same Powers in 1815. The prime object of the Holy Alliance was to secure "peace on earth" and goodwill among the nations. Europe had been devastated by wars of ambition; each country was still bleeding at every pore from the wounds received in twenty years of ceaseless conflict; and the monarchs of Russia, Prussia, and Austria bound themselves in the most solemn manner to the maintenance of peace, and, by their vast preponderance of power, to enforce the observance of peace upon any Power which might be disposed to break it. But, perhaps logically, but unfortunately, the Holy Alliance went further than this. The whole war-calamities of Europe had sprung out of the French Revolution, and the revolutionary spirit had bathed in blood every country where it had arisen. To secure peace, therefore, it seemed to the Emperors indispensable to

nip revolution everywhere in the bud; and thus, while faithfully guaranteeing not only each other's, but also all their neighbours' territories, the three Powers pledged themselves to give aid to every Government which was threatened by revolution. It was this secondary object of the Holy Alliance which has so much discredited it. England, despite her glorious victories, yearned for a long peace quite as much as her Continental allies; but, claiming freedom of self-government for all nations, she had to protest against foreign intervention, in however honest and well-intentioned spirit it might be conducted.

The Kaisarbund of 1872 was a compact of a very different character. Territorial aggrandisement, with war, was its prime object. The Emperors pledged themselves to respect each other's territories and separate interests. That was indispensable for union among themselves; and by their union the three Emperors felt secure of success in carrying out the contemplated work of aggression. A century ago the same three Powers formed an alliance for the destruction of Poland; the Kaisarbund of 1872 was formed for the partition of Turkey. The matter came about in this way: At the meeting of the Czar and the King of Prussia at Warsaw in 1870, Russia engaged to help Prussia in the then impending and arranged-for war with France, by neutralising the expected hostility of Austria; and in return, the Prussian Government engaged to support Russia in abolishing the Black Sea clauses of the Treaty of Paris which closed the Crimean war, and also to allow her to work her will in the "Balkan peninsula." Before Prussia was quite out of the wood in the French war, Prince Gortschakoff took payment of the first part of

the engagement by proclaiming that Russia would be no longer bound by the restrictions put by the Treaty of 1856 upon her naval power in the Black Sea. And Europe, including England, quietly acquiesced.

In 1872 Russia became impatient to act upon the second and more important part of Germany's engagement. But what was to be done with Austria? That Power would be as good as destroyed if she allowed Russia to occupy the valley of the Danube and surround her in the anaconda-like folds of Pan Slavism. So threatened, Austria would probably fight; and although Gladstonian England was reckoned as not in the field, Austria and the Turks together would take a good deal of fighting and money to beat them. Alexander II. is not bellicose; and although bent upon wiping out the Crimean defeat, and aggrandising his dominions at the expense of Turkey, he shrinks from taking the bull by the horns. Bismarck solved the difficulty by proposing that Austria should be taken into the conspiracy, and be made a partner in the game. And so, after all their quarrels, the Emperors of Russia, Austria, and Germany united themselves in the Kaisarbund, striking a new bargain.

Austria was the first to set the ball a-rolling. The Emperor Francis-Joseph became suddenly deeply interested in the welfare of his Dalmatian subjects, and made a tour through the south-eastern portion of his dominions—that is, those conterminous with Turkey, While strengthening the loyalty of the Dalmatians (ever exposed to the allurements of Italy), he sought to attract to himself the Christian portion of the inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Soon after, insurrectionary movements began in these Turkish provinces; and the insurgents, again and again driven

in flight across the Austrian frontier, were there fed and maintained, and allowed to go back and resume the insurrection as soon as the Turkish troops were out of the way. About the same time Russia began her intrigues in Bulgaria, which at a later time led to the Bulgarian insurrection, the bloody suppression of which by the Turkish population is remembered as the "Bulgarian atrocities."

Despite these intrigues from without, Turkey would not take fire. Despite Austria's fostering, the insurrection in the Herzegovina was little more than brigandage. To expedite matters, Austria again moved. A quarrel was to be fastened upon Turkey, and in the "Andrassy Note" the Turkish Government was called upon to reform her internal administration; and all the Powers of Europe were asked to support this beneficent and philanthropic proposal—which they did. Still, this did not advance matters much; and Turkey was actually growing stronger under the eyes of her intriguing foes. After the Bosnian "insurrection" had lingered on for ten months, Mukhtar Pasha finally disappointed the hopes of its foreign promoters by crushing the "insurgents" at Donga, and entering Nicksich on the 29th of April 1876. This was gall and wormwood both to Austria and Russia, by compelling them to take overt action. To expedite matters, Austria again moved. On the 4th May the Austrian ambassador called upon Lord Derby and informed him that there was "an entire agreement between the Governments of Austria, Germany, and Russia as to affairs in the East." Events thereafter moved rapidly. A crisis seemed impending at Constantinople. Abdul Aziz was in danger of being deposed by the Ulemas and Supreme Council, who saw that he was sending Turkey to the dogs. Then came

a meeting of the Imperial Chancellors at Berlin,—the Czar resolving to make matters safe and sure with his allies before delivering the home-stroke which appeared to him to be necessary. On the 13th May the “Berlin Memorandum” (which, as has been officially stated, was drawn up solely by Russia) was issued to the Courts of Europe—England, of course, included—but an answer was required within forty-eight hours. In fact, the three Emperors had made up their minds that a *coup de main* against the Turks should be struck *at once*; and they did not care (at least they thought they did not care) what answers might come from the other Powers. Moreover, the Andrassy Note had been universally assented to; and on the face of it, there was not any striking difference between it and the Berlin Memorandum. There was “coercion” for Turkey in both, only it was more specific in the latter.

The British Government, however, had looked on long enough. Genuine and generous philanthropy is so deep-seated in our people, that they are always prone to be tricked by philanthropic professions, especially as they cannot see behind the curtain and note the authors of such manifestoes getting ready the bayonet or bludgeon. But Governments (as is expected of them) can see much more than meets the eye of the public, or of the sharpest-sighted of newspaper correspondents; and “secret service” money is sometimes spent to good purpose.

Although assenting to, and therefore participating in, the Andrassy Note, the British Government were awake to the hollowness of the Imperial professions, and more or less aware of the manœuvres going on behind the scenes.* But the manœuvres which the Berlin Memorandum was meant to cover, like a drop-scene, from the eyes of the public, were of a startling and most formidable character. The British Government instantly rejected the Memorandum, so curtly and haughtily submitted to it, and the British fleet was sent to the Dardanelles. Why was this? The opening clause of the Memorandum set forth—“That the great Powers, in view of recent events, *should agree* to send vessels of war” to certain menaced points, including Smyrna, Salonica, and Constantinople, with combined instructions for “armed co-operation in maintaining order and tranquillity.” Well, they *had* agreed; and what form was this “armed co-operation” to take? Perhaps the British Government had clearer information upon this point than the Memorandum gave. Let us mention some facts of which our readers need only to be reminded; but we shall venture to begin with what we shall call an important conjecture:—

Hardly was the Berlin Conference at an end than a secret despatch reached Downing Street from the Continent. This was on the Friday night or Saturday morning. That very day the Channel Fleet was ordered to sail for the Mediter-

* As regards the so-called insurrection in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Consul Holmes reported that there was “no insurrection except on the frontier, where it has been produced by invasion from without—an invasion by bands *openly formed in Austrian Croatia and Servia*.” And Lord Derby wrote on the same subject (Jan. 14, 1876)—“There can now be no doubt that it is fomented from without.” And he added this home-thrust to hypocritical Austria and Russia: “If the Powers who advocate enjoining proposals on the Porte are desirous of pacifying the insurgent provinces, they should show their goodwill by restraining (as it is notorious that some of them have the means of doing) the open encouragement given to the insurgents, and by using real influence to restrain Servia and Montenegro.”

anean, and the Duke of Edinburgh, hastily excusing himself from a civic banquet, hurried from London to join his ship; and, as soon appeared, the combined Home and Mediterranean squadrons—in one grand word, the British fleet—made its appearance at Besika Bay; ready to steam through, and, if necessary, force the passage of, the Dardanelles on its way to Constantinople. Our Channel Fleet sailed on the Sunday after the meeting of the Imperial Chancellors at Berlin; on Monday morning the German ironclads steamed out of Wilhelmshoe in the Baltic, destined for the Mediterranean. And they came as far as the British Channel: but the British fleet had got the start; the game was up; and they were recalled.

What was in that secret despatch which produced such energetic action at Downing Street? We do not know; but judging from scattered statements (some of them well-known facts, others rumours) which appeared in Continental journals about that time, we give the following account, and leave it to be verified by the future. Abdul Aziz was then tottering on his throne; a revolution was impending in the Turkish capital; a Russian *corps d'armée*, conveyed by sea, was to land at Bourgas, and march upon Constantinople,—perhaps invited by Abdul Aziz, or, under any case, to put down “disorder.” “Order” was to reign by Russian bayonets at Stamboul as of old at Warsaw. And the German fleet? It was to co-operate with the Russian squadron in the Black Sea, and, together, overpower the Turkish ironclads, for which the Russian fleet was no match; and the captured Turkish ironclads were to be Germany’s recompense for this co-operation and expenditure. The Eastern Question “was not worth the bones of a single

Pomeranian landwehrman;” but the Emperor William, to help his ally, was willing to let out his ironclads (one of which went to the bottom of the British Channel) for a *quid pro quo*.

Our people, in all this, saw only a sudden and welcome, but apparently excessive, display of spirit on the part of the Government. They were indignant at the curt and imperious manner in which the Memorandum had been flung to the British Government for acceptance or acquiescence; and they were pleased to see England asserting her place in the councils of Europe,—especially in so momentous an affair as the Eastern Question. But the public little dreamt of the tremendous crisis during these few days. By-and-by it will become known that Europe was within a few hours of witnessing a Russian *coup de main* upon Constantinople, and a *coup de grâce* to the independence of the Porte. That third week in May 1876 beheld a parallel to the events connected with the secret clause of the Treaty of Tilsit, whereby Napoleon was suddenly, and without any declaration of war, to seize the fleet of neutral Denmark. Receiving private information of this secret clause, the British Cabinet boldly anticipated the Napoleonic *coup* by the Copenhagen expedition, which got possession of the Danish fleet while the French legions were advancing by forced marches to capture it and add it to their own naval power against England. This bold and rapid stroke delivered by our Government created a great outcry on the part of the Opposition, who declaimed against it as foul play to a neutral State. For long the Government had to bear the opprobrium in silence, in order to cover its secret informant; but at length the secret clause was published, and the whole nation beheld the

danger thus escaped, and united in praise of the prompt and bold decision of the Cabinet. According to our belief, a similar meed of praise is in store for the Government for its energetic action in May 1876.

Then the Russo-Turkish war came. Baffled in her secret schemes and hardly veiled intrigues; finding the insurrectionary movements in Turkey a failure, and the Serbians, despite Tchernayeff and the Russian volunteers, thoroughly beaten and forced to sue for peace,—the Czar at length openly declared war, and the Muscovite legions swarmed across the Pruth and the Danube. Turkish power, after a gallant defence, was crushed both in Asia and Europe; and only the presence of the British fleet saved Constantinople from the hands of the Grand Duke. Russia had been more successful than even was contemplated in the secret councils of the Kaisarbund. But thanks to the resolution of the British Government, aided by the energetic support of Austria and the acquiescence of all the Powers, the Treaty of San Stefano had to be submitted to a European Congress; and the Treaty of Berlin arose in its stead.

Even Germany was well pleased with this. Prince Bismarck's early statement that the Eastern Question was not worth the life of a single German soldier, was merely an announcement—to Russia as well as to England—that Germany would not draw the sword in the matter. But that patriotic statesman could not be indifferent to the fate of the great valley of the Danube—Germany's sole eastward commercial route and outlet to the sea. With perfect truth he may say that he acted as a "friendly broker" for Russia in the negotiations at Berlin; but none the less he must have been well pleased

that the pressure of the other Powers compelled Russia to give way,—especially on the important point of speedily evacuating the conquered territories in Europe. In Asia, alas! instead of evacuation, the Treaty of Berlin gave new and unwon conquests to Russia; but no Power cared for that except England—and England had to submit.

The influence of the other Powers at Berlin had another effect, very galling to Russia. Austria found herself able to claim what she had been promised under the Kaisarbund. And the public of Europe was startled to learn that the Congress had agreed upon a further dismemberment and spoliation of Turkey. Austria was to annex Bosnia and the Herzegovina,—her long-coveted spoil. Russia would have no objection to this "parallel occupation" if she were allowed to continue in occupation of the valley of the Danube, from Serbia to the sea; and, as has since become apparent, when the Treaty of Berlin was signed, Russia entertained not merely a hope, but the belief that, by mingled cajolery and force, she would be able to preserve her military hold upon the conquered territories. Who was to turn her out? Not Turkey, for she was crushed and helpless. Not England, for—to use Bismarck's phraseology—"the whale could not fight the elephant on land." Befriended by her allies in the Kaisarbund, Russia could maintain her grasp upon Bulgaria and its impregnable Quadrilateral: the other Powers might rave or be silent as they pleased. But it was not so to be. Austria was as imperative as England in insisting upon the withdrawal of the Russian troops behind the Pruth. Thereupon the old Muscovite hatred of Austria revived. There was the other member of the Kaisarbund to appeal to. Let Germany coerce Austria, as Russia

had done for Prussia in 1870, and Austria would be compelled to yield. The German Government declined to do so. Russia had signed the Treaty of Berlin, which ratified to her vast gains from the war; she was bound to fulfil her own engagements. Prince Bismarck, moreover, stood upon his dignity. As President of the Congress of Berlin, he was in a peculiar degree bound to see that the Treaty was not set at naught. Besides, his conduct was in strict accordance with the terms of the Kaisarbund. Was it not solemnly agreed that each of the allied Powers was to respect the interests of the others? The German Government would not budge from this position. It had established a firm and most natural alliance with Austria, and it was of great importance that Austria should be extended eastwards, so as to be a check upon the Panславic progress of Russia. England, also, was in full accord with Germany and Austria in demanding the evacuation of the Danubian valley by Russia; and the evacuation had to be carried out.

In these events may be seen the progress of the decay of the Kaisarbund. Despite the vast advantages which she had derived from the war, Russia was not satisfied. She was wroth that Austria should annex Bosnia, while she had to evacuate her own conquests in the Balkan peninsula. And when Germany stood aloof, but virtually and plainly siding with Austria, Prince Gortschakoff saw that the Kaisarbund was really at an end,—supplanted by a new alliance designed to make both Germany and Austria independent of Russia. He believed he had been duped by his allies. In effect, he was so; but, chiefly, he had duped himself. It was not merely that Germany had profited more than Russia from the Russo-

German alliance; nor was it only that Austria got a good slice of European Turkey, while Russia got none: but Prince Gortschakoff saw his long-sighted schemes for Russian ambition entirely breaking down. Whatever be the personal affection between the Imperial uncle and nephew, it was from no love for Prussia that Gortschakoff helped her to beat first Austria and then France. It was to make enemies for her—to surround Prussia on west and south by two powerful neighbours whom she had beaten or despoiled, and who would never rest until they had their revenge. So circumstanced, Germany must remain dependent upon the friendship of Russia, and for that friendship must pay service. Meanwhile, by reopening the Eastern Question, Gortschakoff reckoned that, supported by Germany, Russia would be so powerfully aggrandised that Austria, enfolded in Panславic coils, would be at her mercy. Austria would be rendered useless as a future ally for Germany; while, partly for revenge, partly by necessity, she would be a ready ally for Russia. Thus, while assenting to Prussia making herself a Germanic empire, Gortschakoff, by the temporary use of her alliance, was preparing a predominant position for Russia, for which Germany, surrounded by enemies of her own making, would be no match. Russia would then be the supreme arbiter of Europe, and could gradually and surely complete her traditional policy. Prince Gortschakoff, doubtless, has been much obstructed in his long-sighted schemes by the inclinations of his Imperial master, who preferred present comfort to distant ambition. Probably it was the personal predilections of the Czar, rather than the wishes of Gortschakoff, which assented to the German proposal that Austria should

be made an ally, instead of treated as a foe, in the Eastern Question. A league of the Emperors was a congenial idea to Alexander II., especially as it vastly diminished Russia's risk in the contemplated Turkish war. Yet it was by this plan that Prince Bismarck, by rendering vitally important service to his old enemy, was able to make Austria a firm ally, while strengthening her position against future hostility from Russia.

Count Beust, who cannot forgive Sadowa, is likely to retire from the Austrian service, now that all hostility to the Court of Berlin is at an end. Prince Bismarck is at Gastein, along with the Papal Nuncio at Vienna, and Prince Hohenlohe, German ambassador at Paris,—doubtless seeking a solution of the Church question, which creates so much internal discord in Germany. Thereafter the great German Chancellor goes to Vienna, to have a final conference with Count Andrassy, and draw firm and close the bonds of the new Austro-German alliance.

The Kaisarbund is dead. While it lasted, it greatly injured the interests of England in the Eastern Question, especially in Asia Minor,—for which Austria and Germany cared nothing. But in its dissolution it has given rise to a rearrangement of power highly advantageous for the general interests of Europe—those of England included. There is in progress a shifting of alliances, which will bear fruit in time; but there need be no apprehension of war at present. Germany and Austria have no desire

or motive to attack or even quarrel with Russia. The feud must be made by Russia herself; and at present she is in no position to do so. It was at the desire of the Czar that the stout old German Emperor set out from Berlin a day sooner for his military reviews at Königsberg, in order to meet his Imperial nephew at Alexandrowo. Prince Gortschakoff is furious at seeing the failure of his far-seeing schemes for rendering both Germany and Austria dependent upon Russia; but Alexander II. is not the type of man to boldly sanction the projects of his Chancellor for setting both Europe and Asia on fire to obtain his revenge. The Czarewitsch, however, is more likely to approve such schemes; and on Tuesday the 16th, the mere rumour of the sudden death of the Czar in Livadia created a semi-panic on the London Stock Exchange.

Such, then, has been the career of the Kaisarbund. It will have, and deserves, a chapter in history to itself. In this article we but sketch its career in outline, briefly and imperfectly. A new course in European affairs is opening, doubtless pregnant with great issues. The Teutonic empires of Central Europe have assumed a united and independent position—with Slav and Celt hostile on east and west; while Italy coldly considers to which side she should lean, and meditates an increase of her already excessive military expenditure.* This new-born kingdom has now become a chief determining factor in the balance of power in belligerent Europe.

* The correspondent of the 'Standard' writes from Rome (15th September): "It is stated this evening that the War Minister has declared an increased expenditure to be necessary for the efficiency of the army and the system of national defence. The Minister of Finance, in the present state of affairs, strongly opposes any augmentation of the expenditure. A Council of Ministers will be held to decide the question, and, if possible, to conciliate both parties; but it is said that General Bonelli will resign if his propositions are not agreed to."

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE.

VIII. NEWSPAPER OFFICES.

WE have already devoted an article to journalists, yet it seems to us that, scarcely touching on the former ground, there is much that may be interesting to be said of the modern newspaper office in its mechanical rather than its intellectual aspects ; although it is true that the two are so closely connected, that it is difficult to treat the one without allusion to the other. Setting aside the growing influence of journalism, and the leverage it exercises on our political system, one of the leading newspaper establishments, regarded simply as a manufactory, leaves ordinary trade enterprise immeasurably behind it in the perfection of its methods and the precision of its organisation. Nowhere, not even in the well-drilled ranks of the German army, is there such admirable discipline among the motley corps of workers, from the personal staff of the director-in-chief down to the "devils," who are the grimy counterparts of the drummer boys. And necessarily so ; because the perfection of the mechanism is being perpetually tested under the most trying conditions : the slightest hitch betrays itself instantaneously, since it gives a shake or a shock to some part of the system ; and alertness is maintained by the sharp penalties of censure, fine, or summary dismissal. The never-ending work is being done against time ; everybody depends upon everybody else ; while delays are dangerous and might be fatal. Where efficiency is in question money is disregarded ; and duplicate sets of costly machinery make total collapse a practical impossibility.

It is that essential element of economy of time that makes the manufacture so exceptionally wonderful. Time must mean money in all branches of business ; and public carrying companies in particular undertake certain responsibilities to their customers which may be enforced by actions for heavy damages. But if a cotton mill or an iron forge have to slacken or suspend operations, it is the concern of nobody but the owner, and nobody else need be the wiser. He calculates his loss, writes it off and liquidates it, and he may even hope to weather a prolonged strike. As for the great railway companies, who should be bound to be punctual before everything, we know how they play fast and loose with their passengers. City trains crowded with impetuous business men may be delayed habitually morning after morning ; and save on some exceptional occasion that proves the rule, the discontent is thrown off in harmless grumbling. The excuse is tacitly admitted that, in the unavoidable complication of traffic, speed must be habitually sacrificed to safety. With the newspaper, excuses and apologies are inadmissible. The work must be done somehow, and thoroughly well done to the moment. The earth might as soon come to a stop on its axis, as a daily journal fail to fulfil those conditions of its existence, which must recur at the identical hours on six days out of the seven. The work to all intents and purposes is ceaseless ; and what work it is ! In other factories the expenditure of intellect and inventive power is capitalised once and for all ; thenceforward simple me-

chanists can draw the revenues in the shape of waggon-loads of raw material, dexterously manipulated by the machinery they set in motion. In the newspaper office the raw material is the impalpable essence of active brains. There is no filling capacious magazines beforehand, with those reserves that prudence would recommend. The bulk of the nightly supplies must be provided on the spur of the moment; and what seems marvellously to resemble inspiration must be summoned and sustained by an effort of the will. Sometimes there may be no lack of sensational matter and a superabundance of themes for the leading articles. But at other times the bricks must be made without straw; and the public is the most inexorable of task-masters. The given space must be filled somehow; and filled in a manner that must parody productions under more favourable circumstances. Happily the mass of readers are not over critical; and a fluent style with well-sounding periods may be made to do duty for sense and substance. But the keeping a newspaper to the mark in the depths of the dead season is what really strikes the initiated with admiration. It is then that the fancy comes into play; that the men whose department of the literary profession is popularly supposed to be most prosaic, show resources and an adaptability that approach almost to genius. Under circumstances when a Tennyson or a Victor Hugo would fold their arms in despair, they rise to a sense of their responsibilities and answer unflinchingly to the spur.

Looked at merely in its financial aspects, journalistic enterprise nowadays throws most other trade enterprises in the shade. Nowhere is competition more intense or more *entraînant*; for a single

speculator who is foolishly lavish may force his rivals to follow his example in spite of themselves. It may be clear, for instance, to a cool-headed man, that no possible general increase of circulation can recoup some new and extravagant arrangement for telegrams. But it is equally evident that the journal adopting it would, in the meantime, get such a start of its contemporaries as they cannot afford to allow. At the same time similar considerations cut the other way; and, at least in England and America, the position of the well-established papers is yearly becoming less assailable by upstarts. If they have expended enormously, they are entering into the enjoyment of their harvest; they have engaged their talent and asserted their popularity; old friendships and familiar associations are in their favour. Above all, they have practically the monopoly of the advertisements; and, in this advertising age, that advantage is incalculable. We have heard it estimated that the daily receipts of the 'Times' on that account must amount to something like £1000 *per diem*; and, for ourselves, we are inclined to believe that the estimate is near the mark. Conceive the strength of such a position against possible competitors, with self-confidence, a well-tested organisation and almost immemorial supremacy thrown in. So far as cheap issues and an immense circulation can go, the field has already been effectually occupied; and the penny papers have placed themselves in positions where, beyond their constantly liberal outlay, they need never stint occasional expenditure. Rather than let a rival take the wind out of the sails, it would pay them to suspend their profits, or even to publish for a time at a loss. The public would gain,

and the rival would be ruined; even if he had the purse of a Rothschild with the enterprise of a Strousberg. We do not say that a new London journal might not make its way in time;—we see, indeed, how the ‘Clerkenwell News’ has been coming to the front as ‘The Daily Chronicle’—and the prize of lucrative popularity is so great, that we can conceive the attempt being made on a fitting opportunity arising. We happen to know that it has been seriously contemplated of late, and that a powerful combination of Liberal-Conservative capitalists had put down their names for a magnificent sum total, and were even casting about for a suitable editor. But as the project seems to have been abandoned or indefinitely deferred, we may fairly conclude that, as shrewd men of business, they were discouraged by the prospect, and doubted of success. Theirs would at first have been weary work, and admirably fitted to develop patience and hope in gentlemen who disliked to lie out of their money. For even the influence they aspire to exercise would be dependent on pecuniary success; and they would have to wait alike for the one and the other.

The bare expenses of premises, plant, and start, would be something enormous. In the old times of the heavy Government stamp-duty and the light stage-coaches, a prosperous paper thought it matter of congratulation when its circulation had reached some few thousand copies. Now the ‘Times’ with its enormous bulk of matter may sell some 80,000 or 90,000 numbers; while the penny journal with “the greatest circulation in the world,” used to prove, on the authority of independent auditors, that its daily issue was more than double that by many thousands. Each year they need more space and elbow-room; for although

manual labour is being economised by improved machinery, yet the development of business is constant, since the world grows bigger every day. Under the old system, the newspaper office was something more than unpretending. Situated up a back street, or in some sequestered court, it seemed to typify the *incognito* that was guarded by the writers. Above the cellars in the basement where the machinery was at work, everything showed a sublime disregard of appearances. As likely as not, the editorial *sanctum* was as cheerless a den as the fancy could picture. Roomy enough, but scantily carpeted, there was nothing in the surroundings to aid inspiration by the genial sense of a well-earned *bien-être*. The gas-smoke of many a year had begrimed the walls and the ceilings. The bookcases contained the back files of the journal; and piles of blue-books, manuscripts, and papers lay heaped against the ink-splashed skirting-boards. Nothing but an inveterate habit of self-abstraction could have made work of any kind even possible. The editor, no doubt, was always an autocrat. He ordered his people about as he pleased, and could dismiss a delinquent peremptorily for any reason or no reason. But ceremonial of any kind was conspicuous by its absence; and so far as serene contemplation was concerned, the Olympus of the editorial Jove—a favourite metaphor,—was really the wildest figure of speech. The leader-writers, who had to scribble in any odd corner, often did their work at side-tables under the editorial eye. The rickety floors and the ill-fitting doors hardly deadened the harsh babel of mingling sounds. There was a perpetual coming and going upon the creaking staircases: there was a stamping and pattering of feet overhead; and a rattling of carts and swearing

of drivers in the narrow street under the windows.

Now all that is being changed ; though England has been moving more slowly than other countries, and not a few of the established London journals still cling to the old localities. Yet even these have been extending themselves, annexing neighbouring house property, while the fashion of the day all over Europe and the United States is setting decidedly towards mounting the establishments with a due regard to their position. As it would be set down to parsimony instead of prudence, if a man in London society, with £20,000 a-year, had his mansion in Bloomsbury in place of Belgravia ; so it is evident that a journal with a princely revenue and professing to influence the decisions of Cabinets and inspire the minds of the constituencies, ought not to be lodged like the mechanic who struggles to keep his soul in his body. The editor, who should have the *entrée* of the best political society, and go to dinners and receptions in the best houses, ought not to find himself altogether *dépayé* when he withdraws to the scene of his nightly labours : and the class of contributors he relies upon nowadays do not care to submit to be housed like convicts. Besides, in journalism as in everything else, it is become profitable to make a show by way of advertisement ; and to a prosperous *parvenu* in particular, show is almost indispensable. The example was set first across the Atlantic, where the dollars that were quickly made were lightly spent, and where the go-ahead population are caught by advertisements, and disposed to judge of merit by appearances.

In the architectural display of modern New York, there are no more imposing *facades* than those

of the leading newspaper offices—the ‘Herald,’ the ‘Times,’ and the ‘Tribune.’ Berlin has been renewing itself altogether of late years, and Vienna caught the infection in the universal fever of building speculation which precipitated the panic and crash of 1866. Paris had lagged behind, strangely enough ; though the reason of her backwardness is doubtless to be found in the facility with which journals are started and abandoned there, and the extraordinary economy with which they may be conducted. The possession of a very few thousand francs and some trifling credit, is encouragement enough for some ambitious *café* politician to start an “organ” and try his luck. While, as the sheet is small at best, and the news of the day is generally represented by a straggling column or so of *faits divers*—and as the reports of law proceedings and public meetings are summarily condensed when they are not ignored—the whole of the working staff can be housed in an ordinary *étage*.

Paris editors take their professional duties easily. Many of the most conspicuous of them have always been active politicians, probably with seats in the Chamber, and with other irons in the fire. They press their opinions in the signed contributions which may one day be the stepping-stones to high office. As they object to evening work for many reasons, it is hard to get a suitable man to edit a morning journal ; and accordingly most of the papers of the French capital appear in the afternoon. His most intimate friends would mistrust their senses if they met a London editor in a ball-room after midnight. While in Paris it is the chief part of an editor’s business to show himself everywhere in a certain society—to attend the receptions of the Ministers or Oppo-

sition leaders as the case may be ; and to drop in, besides, at the unofficial *réunions* where his political friends are in the habit of rallying. He has probably a liking for society for its own sake, and it is at once his pleasure and his duty to feel the pulse of society for himself, in place of trusting, like his English *confrère*, to the second-hand reports of intimates who are mixing in the world at any rate. Then he need never have the sense of working at high pressure. Far more often than not he writes on the domestic subjects which are always in his mind ; and when he has occasion to treat some sudden question of foreign policy, he does so deliberately after ripe consideration. The minor contents of his meagre sheet demand comparatively little supervision, and that little may be confided to intelligent subordinates. With the exception of the 'Temps,' there are few Parisian papers that take any great trouble about their foreign correspondence ; and the sum total of the mechanical labour must of course be proportionately small.

There was no great need, then, for a French journal to have extensive premises, nor has it been the fashion with them to go in for luxurious accommodation. Many of the most distinguished press men have made fortunes, like M. Girardin, and are in the habit of writing in their own sumptuous mansions ; others, like M. Gambetta, had furnished a suite of apartments over the office of the paper by which they lived. It was reserved for the late proprietor of the 'Figaro' to build and furnish, by way of advertisement, with characteristic spirit. M. Villemessant's tact and business capacity gained him, with very good reason, the absolute confidence of his shareholders, and they gave him *carte blanche* accordingly. He was a heaven-born editor—for his Paris

world—if ever there was one ; and the story of how he floated his infant speculation is very significant of the man and the journal. It is worth repeating for those who may never have heard it, and we believe it has the undoubted merit of being true. The incident occurred some five-and-twenty years ago at the Café de Mulhouse, on the Boulevard Montmartre. Two men met by appointment for breakfast one morning,—M. Dollingen, who had just founded the 'Figaro,' and M. Villemessant, his partner. Dollingen was in the very worst of humours. His venture threatened to be a lamentable *fiasco*. "*Ca ne va pas ?*" asked Villemessant, lightly ; "you are sure of that ?" "So sure," replied the other, "that I would make over my share——" "For a mess of pottage, as Esau sold his birthright. Very well," Villemessant went on ; "here are witnesses. I'll do better for you. I'll give you a couple of *louis*, and pay for the breakfast." He threw down the two *louis* on the table, as the Baron of Branksome flung the purse of gold to Earl Morton ; the bargain was made then and there : and never perhaps has so small a sum yielded such handsome returns. Villemessant knew precisely what would "fetch" the Parisian public. He had clever writers, who wrote much as they pleased within certain understood limits : they signed the articles and took the responsibility for them. His journal, always Conservative, and written with a certain tone of good society—though it can be broad enough and even coarse upon occasion—was religious, frivolous, and earnest by turns, the frivolity of course greatly preponderating. Villemessant turned it into a joint-stock company, found ample funds, invested the capital to excellent advantage, and used all those means

to push his circulation by way of prizes to the *clientèle*, &c., in which the French have shown themselves singularly inventive. Now the 'Figaro' prints over 67,000 copies—80,000 on the day when it appears with a supplement. The circulation is enormous for a French three-sous paper, especially when compared with that of its ablest competitors, such as the 'Débats' or the 'Temps.'

Accordingly, the 'Figaro' must have far more space, and can afford to house its *employés* in a style that is beyond the means of its more serious rivals. Its new premises are handsome though fantastic, and the immortal barber stands over the grand entrance, the emblem of the gossiping journalism within doors. The Moorish architecture, with the horse-shoe arches, came from the country of Figaro, the presiding genius; and the *façade* has been modelled apparently after the Alcazar of his native town. Everything within and above has been devised to catch the eye,—the spacious staircase with its gilded balustrades; the moulded and embossed ceilings and cornices; the paintings on the walls and the frescoes in the panels. The clerks in the outer *bureaux* are comfortably established in lofty and well-lighted apartments. There is a very handsome vestibule or waiting-room, such as you see in the mansion of leading foreign bankers, with heavy Aubusson carpet and luxurious settees and lounging-chairs. The editorial quarters leave nothing to desire, and the contributors are comfortably quartered in the upper floors, removed alike from the bustle of the office and the noises in the thoroughfare. No money has been spared in appointments that seem as substantial as they are showy; yet, after all, if you are familiar with the great London offices, you are struck with the mo-

dest scale of the arrangements. The office of the Parisian journal which, with the exception of the *sous* papers, has by far "the largest circulation," is established between the basement and the attics of a single house in the Rue Drouot—a corner house, to be sure; and when you dive beneath the ground-floor into the cellarage, where the mechanical business of the publication is conducted, the sense of surprise and disappointment grows on you. When you are told that there are 200 persons employed, from the editor downwards—though outdoor messengers and distributors are included in these—you are puzzled as to how and where they can be accommodated. The printing-presses stand in a darkened chamber with no great amount of elbow-room between them, and the damping of the webs of paper is done by separate machines. Of course, the managers of the 'Figaro' thoroughly understand their business; and had additional outlay seemed advisable, no doubt they would have incurred it. The fact is that they *do* understand their business, and so they make a gorgeous show above-board; while the mechanical operations which go on out of sight are really in very moderate compass, and can be managed in a comparatively easy-going way. But in the extent of its profits, enterprise, and *clientèle*, as in its tone, the 'Figaro' is a representative Paris journal; and we can hardly best contrast the comparative magnitude of journalistic enterprise in the French and English capitals than by transporting ourselves straight from the Rue Drouot to the premises of the 'Times' in Printing House Square.

We have alluded already to the rough-and-ready manner in which most of the London journals used to get through their work. The compositors had to set the types

in an unwholesome atmosphere, which became almost pestilential as the night went on. The "readers," in particular, were much to be pitied,—men who had to keep their intellects on the stretch as they read the proofs of every variety of subject, knowing that they would be held primarily responsible for a mistake that might change the entire meaning of an article. They had to strain the eyes by flaring gaslight, with a bustle going on around them that became intolerable to the aching brain. Habit counts for a good deal, no doubt; but anybody who has tried night-journalism once in a way, can tell how hard it is to recruit the exhausted energies, or summon refreshing sleep at will, when you only lay your head on your pillow as the small hours of the morning are far advanced. The rank and file of the printing establishment suffered in their several degrees; and they had only the very doubtful consolation that the editor and his assistants were little better off. Though many of the London journals still stick, for obvious reasons, to the old localities, and though we must remember the value of each foot of frontage between St Clement Danes and Ludgate Hill; yet there has been marvellous improvement of late years in that most insalubrious state of things. Naturally the 'Times,' with its irrepressible enterprise and its practically inexhaustible resources, has taken the lead. And in summing up the circumstances which establish its ascendancy, it is no light matter to take into account the exceptional advantages it offers to work-people. In the new buildings, the occupations of printers and machinists are made agreeable instead of being perpetual misery. Though a man may submit to much for the sake of good wages, yet he

must necessarily throw far more heart into his work if he can feel light and cheerful in the present and look forward hopefully to the future,—if he knows he has a fair chance of longevity, and ceases to have immediate reasons for seeing to his subscriptions to his burial club. The pay in the 'Times' office is lavish rather than liberal, because the conductors refuse to be fettered by the tyranny of trade-unions. Of course the working hands of a daily paper can bring awkward pressure to bear on their employers; and more than once in bygone days the managers of the 'Times' had unpleasant experience of that. Now they decline to have any one in their service who owes any allegiance to anybody out of doors. Accordingly, the men are doubly bound over to diligence and good behaviour, since they are fully alive to the consequences of dismissal, and are assured that zeal will lead to advancement.

In the course of the last few years the 'Times' has been entirely reconstructing its premises, yet never has the slightest hitch in its publishing arrangements given notice to the public of the transformation going on. And that is a most remarkable fact, when we consider the very delicate adjustment of the complicated parts of the gigantic machinery. The new buildings are now approaching completion. The office had gradually been outgrowing accommodation, which had been amply sufficient till comparatively lately. The old premises, which had been altered and irregularly added to in the course of generations of progress, were necessarily deficient in light and air. Printing House Square was a lofty and rather gloomy block of buildings, squeezed up by the courts that were crowded around it, and approached by narrow alleys or

passages. It reminded one of a vast rabbit-burrow, with its beaten runs and its bolting holes, where the inmates and their numerous visitors were perpetually popping out and in. The first event that disturbed the sequestered activity of the spot, was the arrival of the subversive "Chatham and Dover," at their new terminus on Ludgate Hill. There were extensive demolitions to make way for that hideous structure; and some neighbours had warning who might very well be spared: yet these changes on the whole were hardly for the better. The noise of the frequent trains, and the tremor they communicated to the adjacent premises, introduced a fresh element of disturbance, and were anything but soothing to excited nerves. However, the directors and writers of the 'Times' got used to that, as to many other *désagréments*; and a more recent metropolitan improvement has proved of immense benefit to them. The Thames Embankment and Queen Victoria Street opened them up a magnificent approach, worthy the establishment of the greatest journal in the world. The main entrance used to be by a modest door, on the north side of the cramped quadrangle and within it; where you passed under the memorial tablet that had been placed over the keystone by the gratitude of the commercial community of London. The inscription commemorates the exposure of a grand swindling conspiracy, due to the energy and public spirit of the 'Times,' on an occasion when the journal is supposed to have saved the city sums that came little short of a million. The present entrance is from Queen Victoria Street; the door is in the *façade* of a handsome building, which, imposing as it is, gives no conception of the great

extent of the premises behind. Everything connected with the reconstruction has been planned and superintended by Mr Walter in person, merely assisted by a clerk of the works; and there can be no doubt he did a very wise thing in deciding to become his own architect. Mere professional knowledge could hardly have mastered the many wants that had to be efficiently provided for; and the new arrangements, in their most trivial details, show an intimate acquaintance with the working of the paper. The very bricks for the building, by the way, were brought from brick-fields at Bearwood, in Berkshire,—another proof of the self-sufficiency of a journal—using the word self-sufficiency in its literal sense—which makes everything for itself, from its machinery downwards, ink and paper only excepted.

Entering, and ascending a flight of steps, you glance through the glass doors on the right into the vast hall of advertisements. Though that is the department which really makes the profits of the paper, we shall pass it by in the meantime, and go up to the first floor. The first floor is given over entirely to the editorial and directing staff; and these gentlemen have no reason to complain of being indifferently quartered nowadays. They can sit through the watches of the night, in spacious and airy rooms; and should they care to turn from prose to poetry, they have only to throw their windows open, and gaze out upon the bosom of the river, reflecting the stars or the gas-lamps. But much of the work on that floor is done in the day-time; that in the manager's apartment, for example, which is the central point and pivot of the whole machine; and again at the farther end of the passage, where the city editor goes

through his labours methodically, with the help of the clerks in an antechamber. One cannot help moralising on the amount of damaging information that passes into the city editor's sanctuary, in the shape of communications more or less well authenticated. There are seeds for a whole crop of actions for libel in the slips on the files, and under his paper-weights ! The names of tottering firms may be read on a black list, supplied by somebody who professes to be behind the scenes ; with those of the banks that are understood to be bolstering them, whose shareholders have an unsuspected stake in their stability. These are the communications the editor dare not publish, however useful they may be for his private guidance in estimating the course of trade and the probable tendencies of the stock-markets. That by the way, however ; and passing on to the floors above, many of whose rooms are silent during the day, as they are assigned to the contributors who come on duty in the evening, we mount to a chamber under the roof. The arrangements there are still uncompleted ; in the meantime there is a conspicuous absence of furniture, though the walls are fitted with book-shelves. In fact we are in a well-lighted library, which should be as pleasant a lounge as any in London for literary gentlemen of gossiping tastes. It is made fire-proof, as it ought to be, since it contains a treasure which could only be replaced by reprinting from duplicates in the British Museum. Here you see all the files of the paper, beginning with July 1796, —the earlier volumes, with those of the 'Daily Register,' the title under which the 'Times' made its appearance for the two first years of its existence, being at Bearwood. Turning to the early pages, you come

on the intelligence of the morning in bulletins from the battle-fields of Lodi and Castiglione ; on reports of the French fleet in Bantry Bay ; of the excitement in city circles when the Bank suspended cash payments, and the bankers and merchants were holding meetings of confidence. There were advertisements, too, in those days, and some eligible "country properties" in the market, in localities that have long since been swallowed in the suburbs. That room is the one spot in the premises where the genius of intellectual indolence might be supposed to find a congenial retreat, and we are only sorry that we have no time to linger there.

Coming down the flight of stairs that leads to it, we are in the full swing of modern invention. We enter the telegraph room at the end of the corridor. A special wire from Paris is retained nightly from nine o'clock to three in the morning. From Paris regular connection is secured with Berlin and Vienna, and each of these capitals is a centre for the collection of news. Thus intelligence from St Petersburg arrives by way of Berlin, while the transmitting agency in the Kaiserstadt is no sinecure, with the multifarious reports that are always coming in from the numerous correspondents in south-eastern Europe. Each Sunday night a special wire is engaged from India. During the hours that the Continental telegraph is kept at work, it can turn out from six and a half to seven columns. The transmission is effected by synchronous machine, — that in Printing House Square being an exact duplicate of the instrument in Paris. The operator plays upon a set of keys like those of a piano ; and nothing can be simpler or more rapid than the manipulation when one is used to it. Thus, as the French

operator sets his finger on the key marked *f*, straightway an *f* is printed in London on the strip of narrow ribbon that is passing through the machine. As the message runs swiftly off upon the ribbon, the operator dictates from it sentence by sentence to a workman who is seated at the composing-machine hard by. The composing-machine in some respects looks not unlike the telegraphic instrument; is almost as easily worked, and quite as ingenious. It also has its set of keys stamped with letters. Behind these keys, on what would be the upright face of a small cottage piano, is a shield-shaped assortment of converging brass tubes. Each of these tubes forms a channel connecting a reserve tube behind with a little compartment, arranged for the reception of a particular letter. Thus, on touching the key marked *a*, an *a* drops to the action of a lever. Fast as the letters are released and received, they are arranged into uninterrupted rows of words, and passed to a boy at the elbow of the compositor, who breaks them up into lines, and adjusts them for the columns. The machine gives warning to a workman stationed at the back when the supply of any letter is being exhausted; and the empty tube is replaced by another. Nearly one half of the news-work in the office is done by the composing-machine; hand-composing being still retained for the rest, since it gives some greater facilities for correction. In a corner of the corridor on the floor allotted to the contributors, you remark another useful improvement. Adjusted in a table are the *embouchures* of a double pneumatic tube, communicating directly with the composing-room in a block of buildings to the back. In the engine-room are the pair of twin cylinders that suck and blow, pump and

exhaust. By means of these pneumatic tubes, all hand-carrying is dispensed with, which diminishes labour and the chances of mistakes, and dispenses with a great deal of noise and scurry. After a certain hour, a lad takes his seat by the table, whose charge it is to receive and transmit the manuscript which is to be exchanged for the proofs.

A short passage leading into the composing-hall connects the front buildings where the intellect of the journal is housed, with the mechanical departments. In the composing-hall you see the types being distributed and arranged by boys, to fill the fifteen hundred reserve tubes that are daily required for the use of the composing-machines. And there you see the composing-machines at work, the operator seated with his strip of copy fixed before him, playing on the keys of the instrument with practised fingers. And there are the busy groups of workmen standing at their frames, setting up the copy from cases containing types distributed in compartments on the old system. In a corner of the room are the telegraphic instruments that communicate with the Houses of Parliament and Reuter's office. You may ask a question or verify a fact; and learn in a second or two the stoppage of a debate or the result of a division.

In the old-fashioned offices, as we remarked already, the readers had to read as they could in odd corners. Here they have their high desks, with very sufficient intervals between, in a well-ventilated apartment; and although sixteen of them may be engaged simultaneously, each with his boy droning away at his ear, no one need disturb the others. The reporters have equally commodious quarters, where they extend the pages of crabbed hieroglyphics from their note-books by the light of carefully shaded lamps. But pro-

vision is made for the comfort of everybody, and the three hundred *employés* of the paper enjoy many of the advantages of an admirably managed club. Off one of the corridors behind the composing-rooms is the cloak-room, where each of the men has his own compartment where he keeps a change of boots and stockings, with a peg to hang up his hat and overcoat. There is a refectory hall, with long tables, where they can call for what they want at any hour, the provisions being served at cost price. Beer is the only exception, which is sold at publicans' rates. And close to the canteen is the kitchen, where the *chef* in his white cap and apron is busy with his *aides* over the patent cooking-ranges; and there are sculleries and larders and convenient cellars with the barrels of beer for present consumption. The body of workmen are formed into a corporation, and you read the formal style of the "'Times' Companionship" engraved on the pewter pots and flagons.

Retracing your steps on your way to the printing-presses, you may inspect the very ingenious type-casting machine. It has been found that it is somewhat more economical to cast fresh types than to re-distribute the old ones. They are cast, of course, letter by letter. The boiling metal from the reservoir behind is forced in a jet into the matrix in a little box receiving the moulds, that are exchangeable at pleasure. Each letter, as it drops fresh from the mould, falls into its place in a metal gallery, whence it is taken to be arranged in the tubes for the composing-machines. But the central object of interest is the "Walter Press,"—the heart and pulse of the whole establishment. It would be rash to predict limits to the progress of invention; yet it

would really seem that in all essentials the Walter Press must have come near to perfection, since, working up to the extreme power of machinery, it does all that could be asked of the most careful hand-labour, even down to folding the papers for delivery. The time may come when they will be put in wrappers and addressed; but these, after all, would be merely minor points. And yet we are warned that there may be surprises in store for the future, by turning back to an announcement of the 'Times' in 1814, when it first betook itself to printing by steam. Then, after explaining the working of the new masterpieces, it proceeds with natural pride and self-gratification: "And the whole of these complicated acts is performed with such a velocity and simultaneousness of movement, that no less than 1100 sheets are impressed in one hour." Eleven hundred sheets, though only printed on one of their sides, were no doubt a marvellous achievement compared with any previous performances of hand-printing. But now each of the Walter Presses throws off in the hour nearly 13,000 sheets, completely printed on both sides. There are machines in use elsewhere, and notably in some of the great American offices, that nominally print a far greater number. These, however, are in reality duplicate ones, working with double sets of cylinders; and they must be attended to besides by some skilled workmen. The beauty of the 'Times' machine is, that it dispenses with skilled labour altogether;—intellect having once devised and elaborated it, has left nearly all the rest to steam and iron. One man can overlook a pair of these self-acting machines, with a couple of boys to each, to remove the papers. So that, putting rapidity

of production out of the question, it is obvious that there is an enormous saving in wages. The four ponderous machines which the Walter Press superseded were each tended by sixteen or eighteen hands, who had to do extremely delicate work, being paid of course in proportion. With the multiplicity of workmen, some check or complication might occur at any time, and it is a marvel that mishaps did not happen more frequently. With the Walter Press, which is of course regularly inspected, an accident of any kind is wellnigh impossible.

The introduction of the system of rotatory cylinders has wrought a great revolution in printing and publishing; and the Walter Press is the perfection of that idea. Twenty years ago the best machines of the time consisted of rollers passing with a forward and retrograde motion over types arranged upon a level surface, so that quick production was out of the question. The rotary Hoe's machines were an immense advance upon these; for the types now formed the segment of a large cylinder, on which the sheets were pressed by a succession of smaller cylinders. But as the machine was fed by hand, the motion was regulated by the adroitness and activity of the feeder, who, from his stand behind a pile of paper, pushed a sheet between the cylinder at each revolution. What the projectors of the Walter machine desired to do was, to construct a machine that should supply itself without any possibility of mistakes in the adjustment; and in that case, of course, it would have to undertake the damping, cutting, and distributing as well. The main problem was how to pass a continuous web of paper between rollers covered with the stereotyped plates that

must be exactly semicircular. The ground had been so far prepared by the introduction of the stereotype process for the purpose of multiplying the "forms:" the "form," we may explain, is a page of types, firmly screwed and wedged together, and ready for the printing. The beginning was made by casting single columns, and taking off their impressions in a matrix of *papier-maché*. Subsequently the inventors succeeded in taking the *papier-maché* mould from the entire page at a single operation. The experiments which effected the adaptation of the stereotype to the curve of the old drum commenced in 1856, when the Crimean war had given an impulse to the demand for the paper; but it was two years before the process was completed. The chief delays may be said to have arisen from some insignificant difficulties that apparently were to be easily surmounted; but indeed the whole history of the development of the machine shows that patience is almost as indispensable to the inventor as genius. The experiments at last had ended so far in complete success: these curved plates answered their purpose admirably, being melted down after use for fresh impressions; but it did not follow that they could be cast with such nicety as to fit upon rollers that were absolutely circular. Then there was the question of turning them out quickly, and the damping and cutting arrangements had to be considered; and the paper-makers were to be taken into consultation as to supplying the necessary webs of paper. It was in 1863 that the construction of the Walter Press was begun in earnest; and it is to be remarked that the inventors were so confident of ultimate success, though fully alive to the difficulties that might delay them, that

they went to work on the complicated machine as a whole, in place of putting it together by experiments piecemeal. In the course of 1866 the various ideas may be said to have taken practical shape. In 1868, Mr Walter having fairly tested the new machine, decided finally on absolutely adopting the system ; and in 1869 the more cumbersome Hoe and Applegarth presses were entirely superseded by the new invention. The original cost of the change must have been very serious, though no doubt the speculation soon repaid itself. After all, it could hardly be called speculation ; for the capabilities of the new machines had been carefully tried in secret before it was decided to trust everything to them, where a break-down of any kind must have been more than embarrassing. There is a curious memorial, by the way, of the long and patient labours on which the future of journalism so largely depended, in the shape of an old pillar which is still left standing, while everything on the premises about it has been cleared away and rebuilt. The pillar marks what was originally a kitchen, but which was subsequently transformed into the workshop, where the machine of 1866 took shape and form. Of course there have been various improvements since those days. But they have been merely modifications, adapted to the original machine, which is still ready as ever for regular work ; and the curious visitor may trace most of the changes by holes bored in the framework, whence bolts and rivets have been withdrawn.

Talking of the memorial pillar and the original machine, we are recalled back to our stroll through the office from our digression upon the principles of the "Walter perfecting press." Leaving the type-casting machine we had been looking at,

we descend into a chamber devoted to the stereotyping. In one corner is a kind of trap-door communicating directly with the composing-rooms above. Through that the page of type is lowered, set on a perfectly flat surface, and firmly secured with screws and wedges. In the stereotyping-room it is placed upon an iron table, when a thick sheet of plies of damp *papier-maché* is pressed down upon it under ponderous rollers. The *papier-maché* having received the imprint, is dried by being squeezed a second time under a press on a metal surface, which is heated by steam to a very high temperature. The paper dries fast, while the pressure smooths out accidental inequalities. Then the dried page of *papier-maché*, which is the perfect counterpart of the raised type, having been previously carefully pared and trimmed, is slipped into a cylindrical mould shaped so as to cast the semicircular stereotyped plate. The page is placed face upwards, the edges being secured by bands of metal, which regulate the required thickness of the cast. On these a counterpart of the mould is lowered by a crane suspended above them, when the page of *papier-maché* becomes the lining of a semicircular chamber. The boiling metal is poured into the mould, which, having been previously turned up on end, is left for a few seconds to set ; the lining of the mould is lifted by the crane, the sheet of *papier-maché* is stripped off, and the mould, with the cast firmly adhering, is swung round and dropped into a second chamber of similar shape and dimensions to that from which it was taken. The plate has to be planed within, so that there may be no irregularities in the printing ; and it is finally cut and trimmed at the edges. Then you see a half-cylinder of glistening white metal, carved

with clear-cut characters, and perfectly ready for use. Nothing, by the way, gave the inventor more trouble than devising a satisfactory system of planing, and it cost him two years of assiduous experiment before he solved the problem successfully. There are six of these casting-machines arranged in a circle; and we may add that the matrix of *papier-maché*—which, except for a slight discolouring of the surface, shows no sign of its contact with the boiling metal—may be used for impressions again and again. It takes some time to give even a rough idea in writing of what sounds like a series of tedious operations. But in reality the regulation time allowed, from handing the type-form down from the composing-room to having the stereotype ready to transfer to the printing-press, is only ten minutes. When the journal runs to twenty pages, as is not unfrequently the case, no less than one hundred and twenty plates must be cast in course of the night. Those for the outer sheets are disposed of first—six sets being made for the six machines, which have generally done the first part of their work by two o'clock, or shortly after. Six sets or forty-eight plates are used for the inner sheet, which must be printed against time, and goes to press at the eleventh hour.

At one side of the stereotyping-rooms works the electrotypier, who prepares the daily charts of the weather, the maps of campaigning operations, &c. On our way to the printing department we may look in on the engine-room, where are a pair of twin engines by Penn & Son of 25-horse power each, with another of 60-horse power. In the spacious printing-room stand eight presses. Six of these are in ordinary use; but the whole eight are brought into play on the nights when the "Weekly Edition" is

published. Taking one of them, we shall attempt the rather difficult task of giving an intelligible idea of its wonderful arrangements, in language as little technical as possible. A continuous web of paper, weighing 800 lb., rather over four miles in length, and good for 5500 average copies of the journal, is mounted on a small roller. The paper is then passed from the web over a tension-roller, when it is drawn over a couple of damping-cylinders—the saturation being completed by the pressure of a second pair of rollers. The damping, which is done in most offices by machinery apart, is equally simple and effective. The first pair of cylinders are hollow and covered with blankets. Steam passes in at the ends through small pipes, and is distributed by means of centrifugal force through an infinite number of minute perforations. Any inequality of drag on the paper, as it is carried over the damping-cylinders, is obviated by the catch of a couple of small rollers, which also relieve the printing surface from the strain of pulling it along. Now the paper is ready for the printing. Four great cylinders are adjusted in a vertical plane, one above the other. To the uppermost and lowermost are attached the stereotyped printing-plates, while the intermediate pair are merely for pressing, and are covered, as in other machines, with blanket. The paper is led between the upper printing and the upper pressing cylinders, receiving in its passage the impression on one side. Next, it is passed between the pressing cylinders, and afterwards between the lower pressing and the lower printing cylinders, and this time the impression on the reverse side is completed.

The next step is to cut the printed 'Times' roll into separate copies.

It is drawn forward out of the press by tapes, which lead it on to what is called the rock-frame ; but on its way it has to go through the ordeal of the cutting-cylinders. As the dividing space of blank margin between each copy passes, in about the fourth of a second, through these cutting-cylinders, a serrated knife shoots down from the upper cylinder into a reception-groove in the lower. The sheet is severed, but not entirely. A scrap of the paper is left uncut at either end, so that each copy, instead of leaving the rest in the lurch, draws its successor into the clutch of the tapes. When fairly in the tapes, it is seized in a tiny pair of rollers, revolving rather faster than the rest of the machinery. The extra tension snaps the retaining tags,—the newspaper is dragged by the tapes up a sharply inclined plane, whence it shoots down a perpendicular oscillating frame, swinging to alternate sides, and delivering copies alternately on either hand from a "flyer," or set of fingers. But the paper, before being delivered by the machine, may be actually folded. And as many of the news-agents prefer to have their copies unfolded, and as the folder cannot be used for the extra half-sheet with which the 'Times' very frequently appears, the "folders" may be attached or detached at will. We say "folders," because they are in duplicate, as a single instrument would obviously be unable to keep pace with the rapidity of the rest of the machinery. When the folders are to be used, the flyer is disengaged ; and the folders are run forward on wheels into its place. Then the swing-frame throws the sheets into either pair of folders by turns. The sheet on leaving the frame is laid by the tapes along a table. Across the table there runs

a slit ; beneath the slit are a pair of rollers, and above it is a paper-knife. As the middle of the sheet is brought over the slit, the knife comes down, forcing the paper into the rollers, and giving it fold the first. Fold the second is effected by a second knife, adjusted at right angles to the former, sending the sheet between a second pair of rollers. The third and fourth plies are accomplished by similar operations, when the folded journal is dropped into the box that is placed below in readiness to receive it.

In short, the marvel is, as we remarked already, that literally each delicate step in a process that used to task the constant assiduity of the most practised workmen is left entirely to machinery,—and to machinery that with ordinary care can hardly get out of order. The 'Times,' as its inventor says, "is now printed at the rate of more than 70,000 copies per hour—i.e., in less than half the time, and with one-fifth the number of hands required by the fastest and best printing-machines previously in use."

When it was decided in 1862 to attempt the construction of this "perfecting" and perfected machine, it was settled at the same time that all the engineering work should be done on the premises in Printing House Square. That involved the establishing of a shop fitted with the necessary appliances ; and latterly the work has been carried on there on an ever-increasing scale. The 'Times' not merely makes its own presses, but all its casting-machines, composing-machines, &c., as well. Not only so, but it undertakes to supply its competitors whenever they choose to come to it. We believe that the first order came from the directors of the 'Scotsman,' who set up two Walter Presses in their offices in 1872. At present the

'Scotsman' employs three, the 'Daily News' six, the 'New York Times' three; the 'Birmingham Daily Post,' the 'Glasgow News,' and the 'Vienna Presse,' two each; the 'Missouri Republican' and the 'Magdeburg Zeitung' one each.

The papers when delivered from the flyers or the folding-machines are run off in trucks to the publishing department: there they are hoisted in lifts to an upper room, where they are assorted in packages for the morning trains; and those packages are shot down through shafts to the carts and waggons in waiting below. On the floor of this room are the tables where copies are made up and addressed to the customers who order them direct from headquarters; while in a room beyond is a counter for issues to town agents. Those morning trains, by the way, get earlier and earlier, so that the papers reach stations in the Midlands and north in time to be laid on the breakfast-tables of men of business; and Mr W. H. Smith, like the Post Office authorities, has his own sorting travelling vans. Accelerated publication had become indispensable if the London journals were to hold their own in the country districts with their provincial rivals in these days of the telegraph. The 'Times' now goes to press with its inner sheet at 3.45, and the publication ends about 5.15; and thus, in any case, the orations of the later speakers, when debates in the House are carried into the small hours, must be condensed rather unceremoniously.

The premises are in course of being lighted by electricity, and when the arrangements are completed, there will be twenty lights. At present there are six in the printing-room; and the apparatus employed are lamps by Rapieff and a "Gramme-Dynamo-Magnetic;"

the lighting being under the superintendence of Mr Rapieff himself, who carries on his most interesting experiments on the premises. There you may see how heat is converted into motion, and motion reconverted into heat and light.

The advertisement-hall, with the rows of clerks seated at the long parallel counters, and the range of windows looking out on Queen Victoria Street, remind you of the interior of one of the modern joint-stock banks, except that it is far more commodious than most of these. And it well may be so, without guessing at particulars, which are private property. Nothing can show more forcibly the disinterested public spirit with which the great journal has always been conducted, than the spirited conduct of the managers during the great railway mania. According to an article which appeared twenty years ago in the 'Quarterly Review,' the advertisements of the 'Times' had risen, for the four weeks of October 1845, to the unprecedented average of nearly £6500. They must have gone on increasing till the inevitable crash, which might have been indefinitely deferred under favouring circumstances,—for ready pens were diffusely eloquent, as in the prospectus of the famous Glenmutchkin Railway, and the specious promises were vindicated by paragraphs of unimpeachable statistics. Some of the morning journals gave a return for each advertisement in the form of a puff—direct or indirect; a kind of unholy bargaining which, we are sorry to say, has hardly gone altogether out of date at present. The 'Times' had only to be silent and neutral, and its columns must still have been overcrowded, as the most influential medium of publicity. But while making money far beyond all former precedent, it set itself

nobly to stem the current which was hurrying hundreds of thousands of frenzied enthusiasts towards their ruin. Before the mania appeared to have reached its height, it set itself steadily to write it down; and day after day, in vigorous leading articles, warned the infatuated victims of the coming collapse. Its conduct was as effective as it was self-sacrificing. In a single week, in the beginning of November, the value of the advertisements had fallen to one-half; and the 'Times' could write retrospectively with a clear conscience when panic had succeeded to insane over-confidence.

We have adverted to the unrivalled position of a paper commanding so magnificent a revenue and practically assured of its permanency; for the 'Times' has really almost a monopoly of the advertisements that address themselves to the moneyed and influential classes. There are people who may see these in any other paper; but everybody *must* see them in the 'Times.' Do you care to know who is dead or married; to contrast the attractions of the various Transatlantic steam-packet companies; to know what is going forward nightly in the theatres? it is to a copy of the 'Times' you turn instinctively, knowing exactly where to put your finger on what you want. So when one is looking out for an investment, safe or speculative, it is the 'Times' that introduces you to the Joint-Stock Company (limited) which offers you handsome returns if you are content to run certain risks; or to the Colonial Government, the Corporation, or the Harbour Board, which is issuing its 6 or 4 per cent bonds at 97. Casual advertisers know that there must be tens of thousands of people daily who, taking up the 'Times' advertising-sheet with some definite purpose, or, still more probably, from sheer listlessness, may

be caught by some announcement that strikes their eye and their fancy. The invalid comes on a grand discovery which seems the very thing for his chronic complaint; the sportsman on a new self-acting central fire; the literary man on an *édition de luxe*; and the *virtuoso* on some priceless treasure of the antique. Creditors are warned to send in their claims; charities appeal to the sympathies of the benevolent; properties and residences to be sold or let are jostled into the market by whole pages; and servants, from the *chef* to the under scullery-maid, are offering themselves for situations by the hundred. In short, it is the journal of the financier, the solicitor, the man of business, the philanthropist—of almost every class, or of any class you please—who are possessed of a certain property qualification or social standing. Should the paper seem to decline in point of talent for a time, or be run hard by some enterprising competitor, owing to some adventitious circumstance, it is almost impossible that its circulation can seriously or permanently decline; because it is carried along by the sheer weight of those advertisements, till it has time to pull itself together, and recover any lost ground. Putting out of the question the unequalled amount of news and literary matter it provides, people must take it in for the sake of the advertisements. And meanwhile its ample resources come into play. The spirit of enterprise on which it prides itself is piqued; the interests which are grown so gigantic are threatened; it spends money, if needful, more liberally than before;—and the game must almost infallibly go against the adversary, even though he had marked a trick and two by honours. And in all probability the relative superiority

they give it is likely to be increased indefinitely as advertising indefinitely expands. It is not only that everybody advertises; but now they advertise on a scale that would have seemed reckless insanity to their fathers. The tradesman of the old school was shy of throwing away his sovereigns; and he had been brought up to believe firmly in the maxim that a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush. Now we are gone far beyond curt announcements. It is nothing unusual to have a person impressing on you, through a column and a half, that he can sell his goods at co-operative prices. The advent of a new mineral water is heralded for months before by columns of sentences that simply repeat each other with slight variations; and banking establishments, which may be presumed to be careful of their money, think it worth while to publish their balance-sheets at length. The fact is, that the trading classes have come to the conclusion that nothing pays like profuse advertising, and that the more you sow the more richly shall you reap. Already the issues of the 'Times' have been expanding under the pressure, and each additional half-sheet of advertisements carries a percentage of literary matter along with it. When trade revives, or in the next period of inflation, we may see advertisers making interest with the leading journal to have pages devoted to their special affairs, and waiting their turn for admission, like the aspirants to a fashionable club. And as the charges of a monopolist are regulated by demand, there may be advances on present rates, with a corresponding increase in quantity; while, should the revenues of Printing House Square expand, the public will have a percentage of the profits given back to them in some shape, and the paper

become still more of a national institution.

It is a question too risky, perhaps, ever to be tried, whether the 'Times' would gain or lose by reducing its price. As experience seems to show, it would certainly slip between two stools, unless it came boldly down to a penny; and though it could work so far on velvet with its revenue from advertisements, the actual sale of the journal would almost necessarily be a loss. Should the discovery be made that has so long been sought after, and could the price of such paper as the 'Times' is printed on be reduced by a half, we might, perhaps, see the experiment tried. It would be a misfortune for the penny papers; there are several of these that have deserved all their success. Their promoters have shown qualities of energy and public spirit that scarcely fall short of those of the leading journal: they have been patient and courageous under adversity; and have only become more liberally enterprising when the tide of prosperity turned in their favour. It was a bold measure when they decided to publish at a penny,—though it must be remembered that when that experiment was first attempted, there was little to be lost and much to be retrieved. When the experiment had succeeded in one case, imitation was natural, if not necessary. The story of the 'Daily News' is a very interesting one. It was started in 1846, and apparently under very favourable circumstances. The hundred shares into which it was divided were influentially held. Charles Dickens consented to become editor; and Mr Dilke, who then owned the 'Athenæum,' was the manager. From the first it enlisted distinguished contributors, several of whom had a pecuniary stake in it.

It began its operations on the only sound system,—that of spending money freely, and paying its staff most liberally. No paper can hope to make profits at first; but for years the losses of the 'News' were enormous. Then the price was reduced nearly by a half—from fourpence to twopence halfpenny. That half measure was a mistake, of course; and the increase of circulation bore no proportion to the reduction of income. The managers beat a humiliating retreat to the former fourpence, without recovering the lost ground. At last they decided to take the bull by the horns, and come out as a penny journal, while retrenching at the same time in nothing except in the quality of the paper. Whether they had immediate reason to congratulate themselves on the change, we do not know, but it is an ill wind that blows nobody good: the Franco-German war came as a godsend to them; and their war news was so full, so animated, and so early, that suddenly the circulation rose enormously. Any one in the habit of travelling to London by morning train, when Tours was threatened and Paris beleaguered, must remember the rush upon the news-boys for copies of the 'Daily News.' The advertisements had, of course, a corresponding fillip; the size of the paper was enlarged, and it became a most flourishing property. Since then it must have undergone considerable fluctuations; but its proprietors, on the whole, can have had no cause to complain, and it is firmly established as an excellent investment.

The history of its younger rival, the 'Telegraph,' is even more romantic, so far as vicissitudes are concerned. The 'Daily News' never showed signs of extreme inattention to the public, whatever may have been the secret anxieties of its

shareholders. The 'Telegraph' appeared *in forma pauperis* from the first. It came out in 1855 at the then unprecedentedly low price of twopence, but it excited no sort of sensation. The failure is easily explained by the fact of its having been launched without the money necessary to grease the slips. Its then proprietor had to shift on credit when he could procure it, and gradually got deeper and deeper in debt, though his liabilities, for obvious reasons, were trifling enough in the aggregate. Among the creditors was Mr Levy, the present owner, who, after taking over the copy-right in security for an advance, finally bought the wreck of the property for a trifle. We have heard that he telegraphed to a brother in Paris to ask if he cared to go halves in the modest venture. The answer was in the affirmative; and the fortunate speculator, as a sleeping partner in the concern, has since been drawing a moiety of profits which can only be second to those of the 'Times.' For not only is the circulation still probably the greatest in the world—though, from the circumstance of its ceasing to advertise the extent of the issue, we assume that the circulation has probably been declining—but the 'Telegraph,' in the way of advertisements, has a most lucrative *clientèle* of its own. The 'Telegraph' followed the example of the 'Standard' in coming out with a double sheet; and not unfrequently it has added a supplement, making a total of ten pages for one penny. We need hardly say that the advertisements occupy the lion's share of the extra sheet,—and so much the better for the 'Telegraph.' At one time, if we remember right, it sold or published—for the two things are not necessarily the same—a daily average of over 200,000 copies,—a success which was altogether un-

paralleled in its way, and the more surprising in a paper comparatively so youthful. Though the 'Standard' appeared more than half a century ago, yet as a penny paper it is scarcely senior to the 'Telegraph.' It passed through the twopenny to the penny stage—and ever since, it must, on the whole, have been rapidly improving as a property; while its literary character, and, doubtless, its circulation, stand at least as high at present as they have ever done. No penny paper, as it takes good care to announce, gives its readers so much matter for the money; and whether we look at the quantity or the quality, the results are equally creditable and wonderful. It is not our object at present to make literary criticisms or invidious comparisons; but by general consent, the 'Standard,' during the last year or two, has taken a very extraordinary *élan* in the value of its news and the brilliancy of its articles.

We suppose that the Americans would say that, in the enterprise of their leading journals, they "lick the old country," as in most other things. Naturally, we are by no means ready to admit that; but we must confess that, in some things, they run us hard. Having an ocean between them and the European continent, where, after all, the main business of the world is being transacted, they have had to pay enormous sums for their telegrams. Combination has been lightening telegraphic expenses of late, as with our Press Association, and with Baron Reuter's agency. But every now and then some dashing journal will make arrangements to outstrip its rivals at any cost; and, in the earlier days of Transatlantic telegraphy, £2 was the charge for a single word. The New York journals have taken the lead, though some of those in Chicago and Boston

have been very little behind them; and of the great journals of New York, the most notorious is the 'Herald.' Perhaps it is not the style of paper which our more distinguished English press men would care to be connected with. But if profit be the chief object of journalism, the 'New York Herald' has been a distinguished success; and assuredly it may boast of being popular in the literal meaning of the word. Literary merit, we may presume, is regarded as a secondary consideration, though the 'Herald' does not stint the pay of its contributors; but it lays itself out to seek sensations, and is as liberal as unscrupulous in its arrangements for procuring them. The vivid descriptions of atrocities of crime, and the picturesque colouring of social scandals, are relieved by scientific researches at the Pole, and philanthropic exploring expeditions in Africa. Its founder, Mr Gordon Bennett, was a Scotsman, and a Banffshire man. The chief capital which he brought to the launch of his venture was his audacity. He understood the tastes of the readers he wrote for: he went in for abuse of prominent men, and indulged in the most violent personalities; and, with a certain negation of principle, he laid down the prudent rule of never accepting a challenge or representing an insult except by renewing his offensive attacks. So there was an immense demand for the exciting representative paper; and as the funds flowed in, he reinvested them in extending his resources for collecting information. The modern Americans, like the old Athenians, love to tell or to hear some new thing; and when great events were afoot, or important utterances were expected, Mr Bennett, by scattering his dollars broadcast, often succeeded in outstripping his competitors. During the Civil War

he deserved the greatest credit for the promptitude and variety of his war intelligence. And as the paper grew richer it became more respectable. It would hardly be flattered by being credited with conscientious principles, but personal attacks have become rarer or less virulent, except under the irresistible provocation of some burning local question or a closely contested campaign for the presidency.

The 'Herald' is still sensational before anything, as it is still equally shrewd and unscrupulous: and accordingly it makes special local arrangements for being posted up in all the news of New York. We understand that it has thirty sub-editors and chief contributors, who assemble in congress every afternoon. Mr Bennett, the son and heir of the founder, who advertised himself some years ago in England as a yachting man, takes the chair in person when he happens to be at home. There are a certain number of sub-editors charged with special local departments,—such as financial news, ship news, police news, &c.; and reports are made either at a central bureau in the town, connected with the publishing office by special wire, or at one of several *succursales*. There are one hundred and twenty-six compositors, paid by the job, with twenty-four superintendents, readers, &c., on weekly wages. There is a system of stereotyping copied from the 'Times.' The main sheet goes to press at three in the morning, and is printed by five double presses of Bullock, which have very recently replaced the Hoe press. With these Bullock presses there is likewise a considerable economy of labour—though each must be served by four workmen. Working double tides as they do, each can turn out 20,000 copies per hour. The Bullock press does not

wet the sheets; but the wetting is done as in the Paris 'Figaro' office, by damping-machines in the same apartment. There are two engines of 80-horse power each. These are fitted with supplementary boilers; but the steam comes usually from three boilers placed in the basement of a building 250 feet off, being conducted through subterranean pipes. These boilers consume yearly 2000 tons of coal. The papers are distributed in four heaps from each double machine; and thirty men are employed in counting, folding, and packing them. From the head office they are forwarded to the railway stations and to the branch establishments, where they are distributed again to the news agents and vendors. It must be remembered that in America a very large proportion of the papers are sold to chance customers in the trains, steamers, streets, &c.; and when exciting news is announced, there are often free fights among the struggling salesmen round the doors of the distributing offices. The everyday circulation of the 'Herald' is about 100,000; on Sundays it sells 30,000 copies additional.

We have seen something of the working of some of the greatest journals in the world, and we need not prolong our article by visiting establishments that are less pretentious, and necessarily less advanced. But before closing it, we may call attention to the extraordinary progress the press has been making of late years in Germany, under constitutions that are either Liberal or profess to be so. Those small-sized German papers are priced comparatively dear. Yet the proprietors occasionally perform feats of enterprise that are worthy of their *confrères* in London or New York. There is the 'Kölnische Zeitung' for example, which has still its head office in the old Rhenish

city, though it is a Berlin journal to all intents and purposes. Its war intelligence during the Franco-German war was admirable; its foreign correspondence is invariably excellent; and its leading articles are lucid, pointed, and closely reasoned. But its most conspicuous features are its reporting and distribution. It has its staff of short-hand writers in a gallery in the Chambers of the capital, who relieve each other every ten minutes; and the notes of each reporter are flashed immediately along the electric wires to Cologne. There they are printed and published in time for despatch by the night train; and the paper circulates in Berlin in time to be laid on the breakfast-tables. The number of home subscribers has increased in ten or twelve years from about 12,000 to 26,000,—a very creditable total for a country like Germany; and a separate edition is published besides for transmis-

sion to foreign countries. More significant still of the growing interest in public affairs is the state of things in southern Germany. Before 1848, with the exception of the 'Government Gazette,' there was no political newspaper in Vienna. In 1860 there were over a hundred journals of one kind or another; while in the Exhibition year, before the financial crash, according to figures in the official statistics, they had increased to 355. Nothing can be more perfectly organised than the chief establishments; so far, at least, as the literary arrangements are concerned. Each sub-editor has his department—home politics, foreign affairs, finance, &c.; and while their apartments are as handsome as we might expect in a city that half ruined itself by extravagance in building, we believe that great improvements have been introduced of late years in the mechanical departments.

THE CABUL MUTINY.

A SAD calamity has occurred to mar the satisfaction with which the country welcomed the end of the Afghan war, and the establishment of British influence in the territories of the Ameer Yakoob Khan. Our Envoy to Cabul, his staff, and escort, have fallen victims to the lawless turbulence of the country which it was a primary object of their presence to restrain. Sir Louis Cavagnari and his gallant companions have laid down their lives as nobly as the bravest of their predecessors who have fallen victims to oriental treachery in the service of their sovereign; and the desperate defence of the Cabul Residency on that black Wednesday, 3d September 1879, will be read on the pages of Anglo-Indian history with feelings of emotion and reverence not less than those that are stirred by the memories of the Well at Cawnpore, or the Residency of Lucknow. The country suffers and sympathises with the relatives of the gallant officers who have been sacrificed to a mutinous mob; and while it is the lot of the latter to mourn, it will be the duty of the former to take prompt and speedy vengeance for their blood. The steps which Government has already taken are sufficient proof that it has no intention to evade this obligation. And its task must go beyond mere acts of external retribution, for we must examine our own responsibilities for the disaster, and not shrink from attaching blame to any quarter where we may find it due.

The story of the Cabul Embassy is as brief as it is bitter. It entered Cabul on the 24th July, and was received with every demonstration of enthusiasm for the new alliance

with the Government of India. The Mission was escorted by twenty-six native troopers and fifty infantry of the Guides—too slender a support as it now appears; and the Embassy and its attendants were assigned quarters in buildings which turn out to have been utterly unadapted for purposes of defence. By the Ameer and his Durbar the Embassy was treated with every mark of consideration. The intercourse between his Highness and Sir Louis Cavagnari was frequent and cordial. No apprehensions regarding their safety were entertained by the members of the Mission, who freely showed themselves in the streets of Cabul; nor did they find any grounds for believing that the popular feeling was averse to their presence. They were aware of the existence of malcontents, hostile to the Ameer, hostile to British influence, and above all, hostile to the establishment of any settled form of government that would restrain lawless intrigue and corruption. But in the recent sharp lessons which Afghan treachery had received, and in the presence in Afghan territory of a strong British force, both the Government and the Embassy had an assurance that the Ameer's authority would be respected in his capital, and that the country was safe from internal commotions, on this side of the Paropamisus at least. The first actual warning of danger was the fatal outbreak of the 3d September. Had disaffection taken any overt form previously, it could hardly fail to have reached the knowledge of the Embassy, deeply skilled as its members were in the mysteries of Afghan intrigue, and in the characters of the leading

Cabul chieftains; and they would certainly have communicated the news to the Government of India, which would have taken immediate steps to support the Ameer and to insure the safety of our officers.

Our experience of Afghanistan has, however, repeatedly taught us, in bloody lessons, the excitability of the native character. As a single spark dropped into a bazaar will soon set a whole town in a blaze, so the sight of half-a-dozen rioters will speedily kindle a whole Eastern populace into affray. Even in a city like Bombay, with an efficient municipal government, a powerful force of police, and troops cantoned in its very centre, a few angry words between a handful of fanatic Mohammedans and Parsees bred a disturbance that had nearly ended in the sack of the town not much more than five years ago. In the present case, the claims of a mutinous body of soldiers for their arrears, and the lawless steps which they took to enforce their demands, were sufficient to plunge a whole city into insurrection. It appears that the soldiers had got no redress from the Ameer, and they naturally turned towards the British Embassy, where they would probably suppose was the depot of the money with which, as they knew, the Government of India had promised to subsidise the Cabul Durbar. We know not as yet what counsels had first inclined them in that direction, or whether there were any chiefs of influence in the background fomenting the mutiny, but there must have been a prospect of plunder in the Residency military chest sufficient to give a point to Afghan cupidity. There is no more common experience in Afghan history than for regiments to threaten the Durbar as the most effectual means of obtaining their arrears; and the fact that the mutineers assailed the Resident

instead of the Ameer on this occasion, suggests that they looked upon the British as paymasters in the altered state of Afghan affairs. Nor can we doubt that the native jealousy of foreign influence, as well as the innate fanaticism of the rabble, may have helped to guide the tumult towards the British quarters, although we have no grounds as yet for supposing that the outbreak had its origin in any of these feelings. It seems much more likely that these, and every other source of dissatisfaction with the present *régime*, which would not have dared to seek expression of their own account, took advantage of the mutinous spirit of the Herattee troops, and led them to perpetrate a deed which by themselves they would not have ventured to attempt.

And so the mutinous regiments surrounded the quarters of the British Mission on Wednesday, September 3d; and ill adapted as these were for defence, the gallant little garrison held the place against their foes for a whole day, fighting desperately, and killing more than man for man of their assailants. The whole city appears to have risen in the confusion. The Ameer, according to his own account, was besieged in his house and incapable of sending assistance to Sir Louis Cavagnari. He despatched, however, Daoodshah, who, as a popular general, might have been supposed to have influence with the troops, but who was unhorsed and all but murdered. He then sent his father-in-law, Yahya Khan, the newly appointed Governor of Cabul, and his son, with a body of Moulavies, to call the people to order and their allegiance by the influence of their religion; but all alike failed to quell the tumult. The details of the defence are still far from complete, but we

know that the struggle was a desperate one, and that our men sold their lives dearly. According to the account given by a trooper who has reached our outposts, Cavagnari was wounded about mid-day, and must have perished in the ruin of the building. Jenkyns, his secretary, succeeded in sending a letter to the Ameer asking for succour, and his Highness returned for answer, "If God will, I am making preparations." Throughout the whole day the siege of the Residency went on, and it was not till nightfall that, with the aid of fire, the mutineers succeeded in effecting an entrance and in annihilating the surviving defenders. Only a few troopers escaped, with the exception of nine, who were absent on a foraging party. The trooper who escaped had seen the body of Jenkyns, and of Hamilton, the commandant of the escort, the latter lying across a mountain-gun. The tragedy is to us one of the saddest events that has occurred in our history since the days of the Indian Mutiny; but it carries with it no stain to our flag, no taint of shame to the British Government. The members of the Embassy have laid down their lives like true subjects of the Queen,

"Dying grimly, still unconquered,
With their faces to the foe."

And in their death they have shown the Afghans, as well as the Central Asian States, a sample of the spirit that still remains to avenge their slaughter.

The results of the mutiny suggest two saddening reflections, which we trust will be subsequently removed by satisfactory explanations. The first is, that the escort was, as events have turned out, inadequate for the protection of the Mission; the second, that the quarters assigned to Sir Louis Cav-

agnari and his followers were not sufficiently strong to make their safety independent of popular tumults, which hitherto have not been exceptional occurrences in Cabul. It is easy, however, to be wise after the event. The question of the escort was attended by many difficulties which must have been carefully weighed by the Government of India. It may be remembered that when it was proposed to send a force a thousand strong to escort Sir Neville Chamberlain's Mission to Cabul in the end of last year, a loud outcry was raised by the Liberals about the inexpediency of despatching so large a party on a friendly errand. Such a force, said the Opposition, could have no other object than to overawe the Cabul Government and coerce it into our plans. Had it been proposed to escort the late Embassy by a force as strong, we have no doubt a still greater clamour would have been made by the Opposition. But it was essential that the Treaty of Gandamak should have fair play, and that the Afghans should see that Yakoob Khan and not the British Envoy was the ruler of Cabul. The universal satisfaction with which the terms of the new alliance were received by the leading Cabul sirdars was an additional motive to the Government of India to assist the execution of the treaty by a show of confidence in the good disposition of the Afghans. And lastly, the close proximity of a large proportion of the expeditionary force must have counted for much in the arrangements of the Mission. The balance of statesmanship seems therefore to have been on the side of the Viceroy; and if our calculations have failed, it has been rather because in Afghanistan as in France, "*l'imprévu*" is the arbiter of events, than that our plans did not rest on a sound basis.

With regard to the quarters provided for the Mission, there seems reason to complain. That they were unfitted for defence was apparent at the outset, and they seem to have been accepted only as a temporary residence until buildings suitable to the dignity of the Embassy and the safety of its members could be provided. This, however, is a subject that will fittingly be considered when the position of the Ameer with regard to the mutiny is investigated. We are forced to believe that Sir Louis Cavagnari considered himself and his followers to be safe there for a time. Had he had any apprehensions of insecurity he was bound to have communicated them to the Government of India, which would have speedily taken steps to place the safety of the Embassy beyond question. That he did not do so, the despatches which have been already published afford incontestable proof.

The present is not a fitting time to discuss the conduct of the Ameer Yakooob Khan in its relationship to the revolt. We may expect that his attitude will be submitted in due season to the closest investigation; and out of the conclusions then come to must arise results that will bear directly upon the future of his rule. In the meantime we have no wish to believe that he has acted otherwise than in good faith, and with a sincere desire for the safety of his English guests. If we are hastily inclined to think that he might have displayed more vigour, and to wish that he had tried his personal influence with the mob instead of sending deputies, we have yet to learn the position which the mutineers had taken up towards himself. We know, however, that his authority was not strong in Cabul, and that he was only commencing to consolidate his power

with our assistance. The treacherous character of the Barukzye family must not influence us in the absence of compromising facts; and it must be the sincere desire of all who have the maintenance of the present treaty at heart, that the plot should be found not to have had a deeper root, and that Yakooob Khan's conduct may come advantageously out under the strict scrutiny to which it must, in the interest of all, be subjected. In the meantime, if the Ameer himself truly describes his own situation, he deserves our sincere sympathy; and his difficult position is at present the strongest motive that we have for pushing on to Cabul with as little delay as possible. In a letter to the Viceroy, dated September 11th, a week after the mutiny broke out, his Highness says:—

“I have received your letter of 7th instant, and was much pleased. I fully understood what was written; complete confidence was restored, and sense of relief felt in friendship shown by Viceroy, as my prosperity found favour in his sight. I am dreadfully distressed and aggrieved at recent events, but there is no fighting against God's will. I hope to inflict such punishment on the evil-doers as will be known world-wide and prove my sincerity. I have twice written on this subject, and third time by my confidential servant, Shere Mahomed Khan. I had written to say that for these eight days I have preserved self and family by the good offices of those who were friendly to me, partly by bribes, partly by hoaxing the rebels. Some of the cavalry I have dismissed, and night and day am considering how to put matters straight. Please God, the mutineers will soon meet with the punishment they deserve, and my affairs be arranged to satisfaction of British Government. Certain persons of high position in these provinces have become rebellious, but I am watching carefully and closely every quarter. I have done all I could to insure Nawab Gholam Hussein's

safety. I trust to God for opportunity of showing my sincere friendship for British Government and securing my good name before the world."

This, on the face of it, seems an honest statement; and it is all the more important in the face of the reports which we meet with every morning in the anti-national journals, that the Ameer has put himself at the head of the rebels,—the wish in this case being of course father to the suggestion.

We have stated our grounds for believing that the present crisis has been brought about by the mutiny of a body of undisciplined troops, and that there were no general national feelings involved in the outbreak. It is more difficult, however, to predict how far the effects of such an ebullition may extend. To an impetuous race like the Affghans, such a tumult is as a spark to a powder-mine. It is easy to excite national feelings and to enlist religious sympathies in behalf of the deed that has been done at Cabul; and there can be little doubt that the smouldering embers of hatred to the English infidels will now be blown to a glow wherever they exist throughout the country. It will be much in our favour should the present rising prove the means of drawing the different elements of disaffection to a head. It is gratifying, however, both as a present assistance and as a future promise of loyal co-operation with British aims on the part of the Affghans, that those tribes who in the recent expedition have come most closely under our influence, and have learned most of our disposition, have unhesitatingly cast in their lot with us at the present time. The majority of the Ghilzais—a powerful clan who have themselves on more than one occasion turned the balance of empire in Affghanistan—have declared for us;

while the Governor of Candahar has pledged himself to unite their ancient rivals, the Douranees, with them under our standard. No higher tribute could be paid to the influence which, during our occupation of Eastern Affghanistan, we have been able to bring to bear upon the native tribes than this fact. We have thus a large and most important section of the country rescued from the chances of rebellion, and an example of submission displayed that will not be thrown away upon the rest of the tribes. No doubt advantage will be taken in various quarters of the present outbreak, but the disaffection will be active in the ratio of its distance from the British advance. We can scarcely feel surprised that the outbreak at Cabul should have been repeated at Herat, where Fakir Ahmad Khan, the Governor, has been its most prominent victim. The mutinous troops at Cabul were chiefly from that province, and in all probability it is their representations that have induced their friends and countrymen to follow their example. The outbreak at Herat and murder of the Governor is proof, if proof were needed, that the present insurrection has been caused by no special antipathy to British influence, but rather by the hatred of all authority natural to the Affghan character, and by the desire, ingrained in the race, to turn every opportunity to account for bloodshed and plunder. But rebellion only thrives so long as there is a chance of its being ultimately crowned with success; and when the Affghans see that the only result of their present turbulence is to tighten the grasp of the British upon their land, they will be fain to temper their patriotism by practical considerations, as other races have had to do before them.

If Lord Beaconsfield's Government has met with misfortunes

in the course of its foreign policy, it has at least displayed unexampled powers of retrieving them. The promptitude with which an army of retribution has been set in motion on this occasion, and the firm resolve to avenge the slaughter of our officers, have been greeted with acclamations by the best portion of the Continental press,* and have even extorted a shade of approval from the Opposition at home. Had there been a possibility of the Mission holding out, and had not the news of its destruction arrived almost simultaneously with the intelligence of its danger, a dash upon Cabul would certainly have been made to rescue them at all hazard. But now that all is over, we can afford to take time and do what we have to do with thoroughness and deliberation. We do not want a showy vengeance, although we must of course inflict punishment upon the ringleaders of the mutiny, and upon all who can be convicted of having taken part in the attack on the Residency. But our main aim now must be to put a final end to the possibility of such outbreaks as have cost the lives of the Missions of Burnes and Cavagnari. We have to draw the teeth of the Affghans, or to put such a muzzle upon their mouths as will effectually prevent them from biting in future. This is not to be accomplished by a dash into the country, and out again, when the power of the enemy has

been broken. Since Abyssinia and Coomassie we have grown rather partial to punitive raids, which have generally been characterised by much cry and little wool. But in Affghanistan we have a definite stake to fight for behind the punishment of the mutineers. The policy which was initiated under the Treaty of Gandamak rested upon too firm a basis to be overthrown by an Affghan rabble. We now, more than ever, see the danger that Affghan anarchy might prove to British interests; the hopelessness of expecting any improvement from native rule unaided by British counsel and assistance; and the necessity for having observant agents, not merely in Cabul, but in every centre of Affghan power, to advise the Government of India as to the drift of popular feeling. In short, we have no choice between leaving the country to itself and the establishing of such a machinery of government as shall insure order and place the turbulent classes under thorough restraint.

As for the Treaty of Gandamak itself, the crisis at Cabul, so far from abrogating it, has given it a force which the Government of India probably would not at once have put in motion. In discussing its provisions, we pointed out † the impossibility of its execution upon any other terms except an understanding not expressed in the Treaty, that we were to interfere in

* In the present altered tone of French feeling towards this country, and the evident response which the Republic is making to overtures from St Petersburg, the following remarks of the 'Débats' are a high tribute, even if unwillingly paid, to Lord Beaconsfield's policy: "At bottom, however, Lord Beaconsfield's Cabinet has shown a keen sagacity for the interests of the country, and has been faithful to its real traditions. England's embarrassments would be terribly greater had her destinies been confided to the apostle of abstention and renunciation at any price. Greatness is expensive, and England, being vulnerable at so many points, must know how to defend herself by diplomacy and war, or resign herself to loss of empire. Lord Beaconsfield has tried to inculcate this; he has given England the feeling of danger; he has roused her from a mistaken sleep."

† Blackwood's Magazine, July 1879 — "The Affghan Treaty and our New Frontier," pp. 117, 118.

internal affairs whenever the stability of the Ameer's Government and the Eastern interests of Great Britain rendered such interference advisable. The necessity for such power on the part of the Government of India must have been obvious to every one. We had undertaken the charge of the Ameer's foreign relations; but how could we manage these unless we also kept the peace within his borders? At the time when the Treaty was concluded, we certainly never contemplated that we would receive so rude and speedy a call to assist in the internal administration of Afghanistan. It was presumed that, with the subsidy which he was to receive from the British Government, and with the assurance of their support in the background, Yakoob Khan would be able to stretch as firm a hand over his dominions as ever his grandfather, Dost Mohammed, had held out. Whether or not the Ameer, even had his government got fair play, would have been able to justify this expectation, we may be now permitted to doubt, for his conduct in the late crisis rather bespeaks him as wanting his grandfather's energy of character. It does not appear that he has turned the time since peace was concluded to proper account in strengthening his power, and in removing the more obvious causes of discontent among his subjects. The Treaty proceeded on the supposition that Yakoob Khan was a competent ruler, who would be able to answer for the peacefulness of his subjects; but it was also so worded as not to preclude us from making such other arrangements for the government of Afghanistan as events might show to be necessary. Should Yakoob Khan, however, be found to have been thoroughly loyal to the Treaty, great consideration will be due to him on

account of the difficult crisis through which he has had to pass. The temptation to secure his immediate safety by putting himself at the head of the mutineers must have been great, and probably only the certainty that such a step would prove his ultimate ruin has induced him to accept the serious risk of holding out until relieved by British troops. If the Ameer, therefore, should be found to have been innocent of all association with the instigators of the mutiny, he is deserving of our commiseration, and the present unfortunate revolt ought not to be turned to his disadvantage. But it is nevertheless clear that if Yakoob Khan is to continue to rule in Afghanistan, it must be on a very different footing from that on which his predecessors have hitherto stood. We have, as we have said, now no choice between abandoning the country and directly interfering in its internal administration. The former alternative is one against which public opinion has already emphatically declared; the latter is full of difficulty, but it is to be done. Whatever reorganisation of the Afghan Government may be essayed after the pacification of the country has been achieved, the ultimate responsibility for the administration of Afghanistan must rest, not with the Ameer, but with the paramount Power—the Government of India.

It was only to be expected that the mutiny at Cabul, and the reopening of the Afghan campaign, would lead to strict criticism of the policy from which these events have sprung; but we were hardly prepared for the wild burst of abuse which the Anti-national party has poured out upon the Marquis of Salisbury as its author. Her Majesty's Government has been charged as the cause of the murder of the Embassy, with as much jus-

tice as the assassination of Lord Mayo or of Chief-Justice Norman could have been laid at the doors of the Duke of Argyll and the Liberal Cabinet. The Anti-national press has never for a minute permitted itself to reflect that, but for the policy inaugurated in Lord Salisbury's despatch of 22d January 1875, we might have had to lament a worse calamity for the empire than even the slaughter of Sir Louis Cavagnari and his comrades—the presence of a Russian force in Cabul. Such an event was quite within the bounds of possibility, had the do-nothing system of Lord Northbrook, with regard to Affghan affairs, been permitted to continue unreversed. A short recapitulation of the facts under which Lord Salisbury penned his despatch, insisting on the establishment of British agencies in Herat and Candahar, will speedily clear away much misconception on this point.

In the beginning of 1875, it was evident that unless something was done to tighten our hold upon Afghanistan, the country would speedily drift away from the British alliance and come under Russian domination, in the same way as had befallen the Central Asian Khanates. Lord Northbrook's indifference had sacrificed all the influence that Lord Mayo had acquired for the Government of India with the Ameer Shere Ali Khan. The Ameer was sullen and disappointed, and indisposed to accept any friendly advice from Lord Northbrook's Government. Visits from the Russian emissaries were becoming more frequent at Cabul, and we had sure information that General Kauffmann was making considerable progress with Shere Ali. General Llamakin's demonstration on the Attrek, and his pretentious annexation circular, had led us to apprehend an early movement in the

direction of the north-west frontier of Afghanistan on the part of the Russians. Our policy was crippled for the want of more certain intelligence regarding the doings of the Cabul Durbar and the progress of events in Central Asia. Our only representative in Afghanistan was a mere news-writer, who probably did not possess as much political influence at Cabul as the 'Times's' correspondents in Paris and Berlin exercise in their respective capitals. His reports were exceedingly meagre, and not at all to be relied upon; for Sir Richard Pollock, through whose hands the agent's reports passed, states that "any native who took a perfectly independent tone at Cabul, and made no secret of reporting regularly to his Government, without reference to the wishes of the Ameer, all information that he believed to be correct, would very shortly find his position at Cabul unbearable." It was under these circumstances that Lord Salisbury proposed to establish English agencies, not at Cabul, but at Herat and Candahar. Had Lord Northbrook addressed himself at this time to carry out the Secretary of State's instructions, there can be little question that he would have succeeded, empowered as he of course would have been to make concessions on the part of the Government of India which the Ameer had been anxiously demanding for years past. Shere Ali, in the summer of 1875, was not so firmly enmeshed in the Russian toils but that he could have been readily reclaimed to the British alliance. But instead of carrying out Lord Salisbury's instructions, Lord Northbrook set himself to contest them. A whole year was lost; and while the Governor-General was devising elaborate arguments to show why we should let Afghanistan drift,

General Kauffmann was busily cultivating the friendship of the Ameer, and endeavouring to widen the breach between him and the Viceroy. By the time that Lord Lytton went out in 1876, the situation had undergone a material change. Not only was Shere Ali by this time committed to the Russian emissaries, but the aspect of affairs in Europe had begun to influence the East, and rendered it still more difficult to bring the Ameer to reason. If any reflection for our present troubles rests upon an individual statesman it must rather be upon Lord Northbrook, who obstructed the establishment of agencies at a time when we should have had comparatively little difficulty in inducing the Ameer to agree to them, than upon Lord Salisbury, who initiated in the nick of time a course which the interests of British power in India imperatively demanded that we should follow. Had Lord Northbrook utilised the summer of 1875 in coming to an understanding with the Ameer on the basis of Lord Salisbury's proposals, instead of wasting time in combating his instructions, Shere Ali might have been still on the throne, we might have been saved the Affghan expedition, the Cabul massacre, and the necessity that is now before us of overrunning the country, and of reorganising its government upon a basis that must more or less curtail the ancient independence of the country. It gives us no pleasure to speak in harsh terms of the late Viceroy, whose internal administration of the Indian empire deserves the highest praise; but we are bound to say that if the responsibility for our Affghan misfortunes is to be apportioned, there are few of them that cannot be directly traced to his lordship's

policy, and none of them that could not in all human possibility have been averted, had Lord Northbrook during 1875 lent himself heartily to the carrying out of the Secretary of State's recommendations.

The member for the Elgin burghs, of all men, has come forward as the denouncer not so much of Lord Salisbury's policy as of Lord Salisbury himself. It does not need much penetration to discern wherein consists Lord Salisbury's exceeding sinfulness in the eyes of the Anti-national party. Had he but betrayed the Ministry and deserted his post at the critical season when the Russians were advancing upon Gallipoli, his name would probably have been as savoury in the Radical mouth as those of Earls Derby and Carnarvon. But as he stood by the Ministry and saved it from breaking up, he is of course the most prominent mark for the execration of the Opposition, next to its arch-enemy, Lord Beaconsfield himself. Viewed from the lofty height of self-sufficiency on which Mr Grant Duff looks down upon current affairs, the policy of Lord Salisbury conspicuously shows the absence "at the centre of affairs of men who have that highest quality of statesmanship, aptness to be right, aptness to be in harmony with the drift of events and the order of the world." Certainly Mr Grant Duff himself, when in office, was so much in "harmony with the drift of events" in Central Asia, that he declined in any way to interfere with them, and hence in a great measure arose the necessity for a more energetic policy when Lord Salisbury came to the India Office. When the member for the Elgin burghs was at the India Office, with the Duke of Argyll for his chief, the seeds of all the Central Asian harvest of troubles which we

are now reaping were sown and watered. They did nothing themselves, and they would allow the Government of India to do nothing. They restricted the wise measures which Lord Mayo was prepared to take for cementing the Umballa alliance with Shere Ali, and which would in all probability have saved future quarrels with the Ameer and expeditions into his country. "No treaty, no fixed subsidy, no European troops, officers, or residents, no dynastic pledges," the Duke of Argyll and Mr Grant Duff kept dinning into the ears of the Government when Shere Ali was seeking for assurances of support.—(Afghanistan Blue-book, p. 95.) And again, when Shere Ali, frightened by the absorption of Khiva and the approach of Russia to his border, began to earnestly seek some pledges of our alliance, the India Office loftily caused him to be informed that "it did not at all share his alarm" (*ibid.*, p. 108). Mr Grant Duff, moreover, manifested the same *inaouciance* of Russian progress that he showed about Afghan affairs, and played into the hands of Russia in the "neutral zone" delusion with an innocence that, to Prince Gortschakoff, must have been absolutely refreshing. The right honourable gentleman, however, is now apparently determined to make up for his past neglect of the practical part of the Central Asian question by theoretical expositions. The account of the Afghan mischances, which the other day he set before the Peterhead fishermen—to whom, by the way, he quoted Goethe in the original—showed that he had at least followed one side of our policy with close attention. But as for the external events which stimulated and influenced our course of action,—

the advance of Russia, the hostile attitude of the Ameer, the connection between the situation in Afghanistan and our efforts to make peace in Europe, the Stolieteff embassy, the check to our Chamberlain Mission,—these are trifles too insignificant for Mr Grant Duff to deal with, and not at all necessary to enable his constituents to form an adverse opinion of Lord Beaconsfield's Government.

Lord Salisbury's critics are all very careful to leave out of sight the connection of the Afghan question with the recent crisis in Eastern Europe. When Russia found herself worsted in Europe, and unable to make good the Treaty of San Stefano, she naturally was anxious to distract the attention of Great Britain by fomenting trouble in the direction of India. The state of Afghanistan afforded her a favourable opportunity for harassing us in that quarter; and we can see now, that but for the firm tone which Lord Lytton's Government had taken up with the Ameer Shere Ali Khan, a diversion might have been created upon the north-eastern frontier of India which would have seriously impeded the efforts we were making to restore peace in Europe. The Russian mission was the preliminary menace; and had we allowed it to pass unnoticed, we should speedily have found ourselves, so far from being able to send Indian troops to Europe, urgently compelled to strengthen the European garrison of India. In such a case, where, we ask, would have been the chances of our being able to bring Russia to reasonable terms? M. de Giers, of the St Petersburg Foreign Office, frankly admitted that Russia was seeking to influence European politics through her machinations in Afghanistan. "The dispositions of the Imperial Government in regard

to the Central Asian question," said M. de Giers to Mr Plunkett on September 8, 1878, "have necessarily been affected by the political condition in which we were placed by the attitude of England during the recent crisis in the East." This, be it noted, was urged in apology; but we may easily infer that had these "dispositions" been attended by any measure of success, the Berlin Treaty would have been still more difficult of achievement. We have only to refer to the Russian admissions during the latter end of last year, to convince ourselves that the Afghan policy initiated by Lord Salisbury, and carried out in so spirited a manner by Lord Lytton, contributed not less than the efforts of the Cabinet in Europe to bring the Russo-Turkish war to an honourable and satisfactory conclusion in the Treaty of Berlin.

The effect of the Cabul outbreak upon the present Central Asian policy of Russia is a subject that cannot be dismissed with light treatment. The advantage which the present emergency offers is such as no Government in the position of Russia would be apt to pass unnoticed. She was compelled to withdraw from intervention in Afghanistan under circumstances which could not fail to be mortifying to the feelings of the Imperial Government, and we cannot expect that she will be disposed to sympathise with us in our present embarrassments. Notwithstanding the bitter tone of the bellicose portion of the Russian press, we have no reason to apprehend that the Imperial Government will seek to offer any interference with our plans for the settlement of the Ameer's territories. Her own affairs in Central Asia must for some time, at least, require all the energies that the Czar's Ministers can devote to them.

The Russian Government is at present suffering from an empty exchequer and from something resembling political paralysis, and it is otherwise in no condition to hazard a struggle such as any attempt to intervene in our action with regard to Afghanistan would necessarily bring about. Russia, we believe, will be content with humbler aims. She has at present a considerable expedition in the field, ostensibly directed against the Tekke-Turcomans, but very probably designed to advance in the direction of Merv, should circumstances favour such a course. Were our hands free at the present moment, we might view so near an approach to the Afghan frontier with suspicion, and probably make it a subject of energetic remonstrance with the St Petersburg Government. The serious check which the advance of the expedition has sustained, and the heavy loss which it has suffered, will, however, postpone, for a time at least, its progress in the direction of Afghanistan. But apart from the success or defeat of the Turcoman expedition, we must shape our policy in accordance with facts. The Cabul outbreak has unquestionably hastened on the time when the British and Russian influence must meet in Asia on a common frontier. We have had no desire for such a *rencontre*, but it would be unjust to ourselves to say that we fear it. Probably we should be much safer standing face to face with Russia across a defensible frontier, than if a debatable ground were left between us which she could employ as a theatre of intrigue and as a source of annoyance and insecurity to our power. Russia, however, has, we believe, no wish at present to come to open hostilities with a European Power in Asia. Her Central Asian armaments, how-

ever sufficient for dealing with native races and overrunning barbarous states, are not suited to deal with regular armies. She has troubles in the direction of China, to which she has recently been compelled to restore Kuldja, that forbid of her diverting her attention for any length of time from her remaining acquisitions in that quarter. We are justified, therefore, in presuming that if she intervenes at all in the settlement of Affghanistan, it will merely be to seek security for her own frontiers, and as a sort of salve for the soreness which she naturally feels at having been compelled to withdraw so abruptly from her relations with the country last year. We have given Russia distinctly to understand that Affghanistan must be considered to lie outside her sphere of influence, but we must still admit that as a neighbouring Power, she possesses an interest in the settlement of the country to which, if expressed in a friendly way, we cannot fail to respond. We look far beyond the immediate difficulty when we say that there is an urgent necessity for arriving at a good understanding with Russia regarding the aims of the two empires in Asia. Hitherto our different spheres have been so far removed from each other, that it might have seemed like anticipating a collision to have pressed for an *éclaircissement* of our respective intentions. But the case is now altered. We feel ourselves against our will borne into close proximity with regions where Russia, by right of conquest, is entitled to express an opinion as to our approach, and it would be folly, as well as injustice, to ignore the influence which her power upon the Oxus necessarily gives her in all questions relating to Central Asia. A practical Government like that of Lord Bea-

consfield has no need to be told by the Opposition how to meet the dangers that lie in the path of its policy.

When the whole of the facts connected with the recent outbreak have been sifted, and not till then, we shall be able to estimate the extent of the work that is before us. At present we can hardly say whether it is incumbent upon us or not to maintain the integrity of the Ameer's dominions. So far as our own interests are concerned, we can have little disposition to extend the area of operations beyond the Indian Caucasus. All the attention that the Indian Government is in a position to bestow would be required for maintaining Affghanistan proper in peace and security. The Balkh country has never been thoroughly loyal to Affghan domination, and its interests have seldom occupied more than a secondary place in the mind of the Cabul durbar. The settlement of the country beyond the Paropamisus is therefore a subject that does not immediately affect us, and that will depend upon the degree of obligation which we feel to preserve the Ameer Yakoob Khan's dominions intact. It is already clear that we shall have to send our forces into the Herat country before peace can be restored; and in all probability we may have to occupy that town. With Herat in our hands, the Russian expedition against the Tekke Turcomans will cease to endanger the peace of the Affghan frontier, and we shall be in a position to watch its aims, and, if necessary, to prescribe proper limits to its sphere of operations. Herat has always commanded the highway of Indian invasion. Alexander, Timour, Jengis Khan, and Nadir Shah have made Herat the first stage on their road to India. Its

possession has been an object of intense interest to Great Britain ever since the ambitious schemes of the First Napoleon suggested the possibility of a European invasion of India. Great Britain, not less than Russia, requires to set limits to the exercise of her territorial influence in Asia, and the lessons of history, as well as the more pregnant facts of present politics, point clearly to Herat as our goal in Western Afghanistan. When we say this, we must not be supposed to be pointing in the direction of annexation. All we ask is that we shall retain such a hold upon Herat as will effectually prevent it from falling into the hands of any foreign Power; and we must leave the issue of events in Afghanistan to prescribe the way in which that position is to be secured as an outwork for the defence of the British empire in India.

The views of the Russian press upon this subject are singularly moderate at the present time. A late number of the 'Golos' very bluntly states the arrangement which Russia will be glad to accept with regard to Western Afghanistan. She has no objections to our subduing Cabul and occupying the Candahar country provided Herat is ceded to Persia, while Russia is allowed to possess the left bank of the Attrek, so that she may command the Turkoman country on as far as Merv. This, at all events, is a practical proposal, but it is one that no English Cabinet could for an instant entertain. We have an idea—it may be a superstitious one—that Herat is the key to India, and it will be difficult to convince British statesmen that so commanding a point may safely be committed to any Power that we cannot exercise absolute influence over. It seems to be a foregone

conclusion with the Russian press that the Czar's Government is to make use of the present opportunity to establish its influence in Merv; and the only counterpoise that Great Britain could have in such an event would be a hold upon Herat and the surrounding country. Sir Henry Rawlinson, whose long experience and close study of the Central Asian Question enable him to speak with the highest authority on this subject, has put the matter very clearly. "If Russia," he says, "remained encamped on the Caspian, we should not, of course, leave the valley of the Indus. So long as she held aloof from Merv, we should hold aloof from Herat; but if she deliberately threw down the gauntlet, she must expect it to be taken up. We could not, as the guardians of the interests of India, permit her, on the pretext of curbing the Turkomans or establishing a trade-route through Asia, to take up a position unopposed on the Murghab which would compromise the safety of Herat. *That city is both strategically and politically an indispensable bulwark of India, and we cannot and will not allow its future fate to be at the disposition of a foreign Power.*" We have italicised Sir Henry's concluding sentence, to which present circumstances have given a much keener significance than it possessed at the time when it was written (1874). The command of Herat, either directly by a British garrison, or by subsidised troops, must be one of the cardinal points of British policy in Afghanistan; and no Ministry would continue to enjoy the confidence of the country that would admit, even as a subject for discussion, the question of its cession to either Russia or Persia.

The thorough preparations which are being made for the advance on

Cabul afford an assurance that the first object of the expedition will be speedily achieved. Whether or not we meet with serious opposition on our march to the Affghan capital, our troops will be able to force their way without delay. It is a good omen that the command of the advanced force has been given to General Roberts, whose energetic operations in the Kurrum valley and the Peiwar Pass were the most memorable features in the late campaign. His division has already secured the Shutargardan Pass; and allowing for the possibility of the rebels making a stand, we may reasonably hope that he will be able to march into Cabul during the first or second week of October. The delay at the outset, caused by the want of transport, has confirmed the impression produced by the campaign in Zululand, that this is the weakest point in our military administration. The mortality among camels and other beasts of burden in Affghanistan has been great, and partly explains the dead lock which the Government of India is labouring so hard to remove; but it does not augment our confidence in our army administration to find that, when it has to deal with a sudden and unexpected emergency, it is invariably paralysed at the outset by want of sufficient means of transport. It is easy, however, to argue how our present action might have been expedited had we possessed a Transport Service capable of sending our troops straight to Cabul; but it must be borne in mind that the finances of India are not in a condition to maintain a system during time of peace to meet an emergency such as has now arisen; and even to expand the nucleus of a perfect system must take time when operations have to be conducted in a country

difficult to traverse, deficient in resources, and distant from the source of supply. The public, in its desire for that sudden and sharp stroke which we all know is so telling, hardly pauses to estimate the difficulties our Indian Government and its servants have to contend with. We cannot, however, blame the short delay which has taken place before the advance of the columns into Affghanistan; for the uncertainty of the length to which the campaign may run, and of the area over which it may extend, makes it desirable that our arrangements should be upon a scale equal to any contingencies.

The Government of India is to be congratulated upon the firmness with which it has refused permission to the regular correspondents of the newspaper press to accompany the advance upon Cabul. The results of the Russo-Turkish war, and in a less degree the experience of our own two expeditions in Affghanistan and South Africa, have shown that the publicity which obtains under the present system is fatal to strategy and embarrassing to good generalship. We make no reflection upon the war correspondents, many of whom are men of bravery and energy as well as of literary ability. But a war correspondent's first duty is towards the newspaper which employs him. He is bound to get at as full information as he can glean regarding both the movements of the troops and the plans of the general, whose object, on the other hand, must be to have his dispositions kept secret until the time has arrived for carrying them out. There is thus a direct conflict of interests between the commander of an expedition and the war correspondents; and the latter are not on every occasion disposed to postpone their curiosity

to the necessities of the campaign. General Roberts, in his late advance upon the Peiwar, found himself on one occasion compelled to take order with a correspondent; and public opinion readily indorsed the justice of his action. It must be remembered, too, that war correspondents cannot in all cases raise themselves above the party policy of the newspapers for which they cater. The unworthy attacks which, some little time back, were made upon Lord Chelmsford's command in South Africa, showed beyond question a greater regard for the preconceived policy of a newspaper than for the interests of truth. Criticism, if well timed and properly directed, may benefit the ablest general that ever took the field; but we can conceive nothing more embarrassing to a commander than to have his tactics canvassed and his plans condemned even before he has had an opportunity of putting them to the touch. It no doubt involves some self-denial on the part of the British public to dispense with the latest telegrams from the seat of war in its morning newspaper; but the sacrifice is in its own interest. There are unquestionably times when the energy of newspaper enterprise, in connection with an army in the field, must be regulated; and the present is certainly an emergency that requires judicious treatment. The introduction of newspaper controversy and newspaper criticism into the steps which will have to be taken for the resettlement of Affghanistan might enlarge the area of ill-feeling, and make more mischief than editors could mend.

Scarcely less painful than the massacre of the Embassy is the feeling of unseemly jubilation to which it has given rise in the minds of the Anti-national party. To them

the news of the disaster came as the first gleam of sunshine that had fallen upon them since the defeat of Isandhlwana. The regret expressed by the anti-national organs for the murder of Sir Louis Cavagnari and his friends, was very feeble compared with the exultation which they showed at having got a new pretext for attacking the policy of the Government. We can understand the execrations which the Fenian press has been pouring on British policy for some weeks past, but we hardly expected that there was any section among ourselves that would welcome national disaster as political capital. The spirit, however, which prompted the first Lord Holland and his friends to wish that Napoleon might be able to drive the British into the sea, still, apparently, survives among us, and would apparently hail any disaster to the British arms that would be the cause of turning Lord Beaconsfield and his colleagues out of office. Happily on the present occasion, their efforts to excite the country against the Affghan policy of the Government have proved abortive. The public voice has declared in favour of a prompt retribution, and of such a reorganisation of the Affghan territories as will remove all future possibility of their proving a source of danger.

The Opposition has hitherto been unable to find a *locus standi* in the Affghan question. It has advocated inaction all along, without attempting to deny what consequences such inaction might lead to. Had Lord Beaconsfield's Government followed the counsels of the advocates of "Masterly Inactivity," and allowed Russian influence to be established in Affghanistan, and Russian troops to enter the Ameer's dominions, the Opposition would have been as violent in its

defence of the interests of the Empire as it is now vehement against them. It offered to us no alternative counsel, it indicated no *via media* by which we could at once secure ourselves in Afghanistan and satisfy the Liberal party. It denounces our wars as "unjust" and "bloody;" but it has never told us how we could have preserved peace. The same petty spirit runs through the criticism which the Cabul campaign is now exciting. The Liberal press makes no attempt to deny that the expedition is unavoidable, and that the government of Afghanistan must be reorganised; and its only consolation seems to be that the task will be attended with considerable difficulty and danger. If we may judge from the character of the telegrams which the Liberal journals are at present ostentatiously parading before their readers, news of failure in Afghanistan would be more welcome to them than tidings of success. In spite of all the facts, they insist upon the Cabul mutiny being regarded as a national rising: reports of spreading disaffection, of tribes and chiefs casting in their lot with the rebels, of the probability of the rebellion extending to remote provinces of the country, of the Ameer heading the insurrection, are greedily seized upon; and nothing is left unsaid that can damp the spirit of the troops or discourage the hopes of the nation. As an example of the manifest desire of the Anti-national journals to misconstrue not merely the policy but the personal conduct of Ministers, we have only to refer to the 'Spectator' of 13th September. After two sensational paragraphs devoted to the "not-lead-en-footed Nemesis" of Lord Beaconsfield, the 'Spectator' publishes the following, with the damaging comment of a point of exclamation, which, we presume,

in our "viewy" friend's punctuation serves to indicate a shriek: "Lord Cranbrook, Secretary of State for India, is returning to his shooting in Aberdeenshire!" The *motif* of this paragraph was of course to persuade the public that the affairs of India were unsafe in the hands of a Minister who would leave town to take his pleasure, when the business of his department was in so critical a condition. Unfortunately for the 'Spectator's' point of exclamation, Lord Cranbrook was not going to his shooting, but to take up his post at Balmoral as Minister in attendance on her Majesty, and he did not leave the India Office until some days after the 'Spectator's' announcement. This is but a trifle, but it shows how eagerly the Anti-national papers are casting about them for any means of damaging the Ministry. Provided Lord Beaconsfield's Government could be ejected from office, there is no humiliation that this portion of the press would not cheerfully put up with,—no disaster that would not be hailed as a ground for making the Ministry unpopular.

If ever there was a time when the duty of a high-toned Opposition was to sink party differences in the general interests of the Empire, it is undoubtedly the present. It would be useless to ignore the fact that our relations with the Czar's Government, arising out of the settlement of Afghanistan, must be of a very delicate character, and such as cannot be subjected to the fierce atmosphere of party discussion. The English Radicals have once already misled Russia as to the views of this country, and precipitated her into a war which she has now good reason to regret. It is easy to conceive, if the Afghan war and the future government of the Ameer's

country are to be made the subject of an agitation policy, the difficulties that will be placed in the way of our being able to come to a harmonious understanding with Russia, such as is most desirable under present circumstances. We are justified in expecting that Lord Hartington and his friends will prove themselves worthy of the more patriotic traditions of the Whig party ; but, unfortunately, his influence over his own followers is of a very limited character. It is worthy of notice, however, that the misconduct of his party has compelled Lord Hartington to warn his hearers at Newcastle that he at least is sincere in his sorrow and regret at the Cabul outbreak. We never permitted ourselves to doubt his Lordship's patriotism, but the fact that he has felt it necessary to make such an apology shows how bitterly the leader of the Opposi-

tion feels the ill-concealed delight of his Anti-national followers. It is significant, as indicating the delicate nature of our diplomacy connected with the Central Asian Question, that Lord Beaconsfield, when addressing his old constituents at Aylesbury the other day, felt himself bound to avoid all reference to affairs in Afghanistan ; and it is not too much to ask that some portion of the restraint which Ministers have placed themselves under should be adopted by the tail-end of the Opposition. The time is not far distant when a General Election will give the Anti-nationalists an opportunity of impeaching Ministers before the constituencies, and until that time comes we claim for the Government fair-play to carry out its Eastern Policy, and to settle the Central Asian Question so that it shall cease to be the danger of the future to British power in India.

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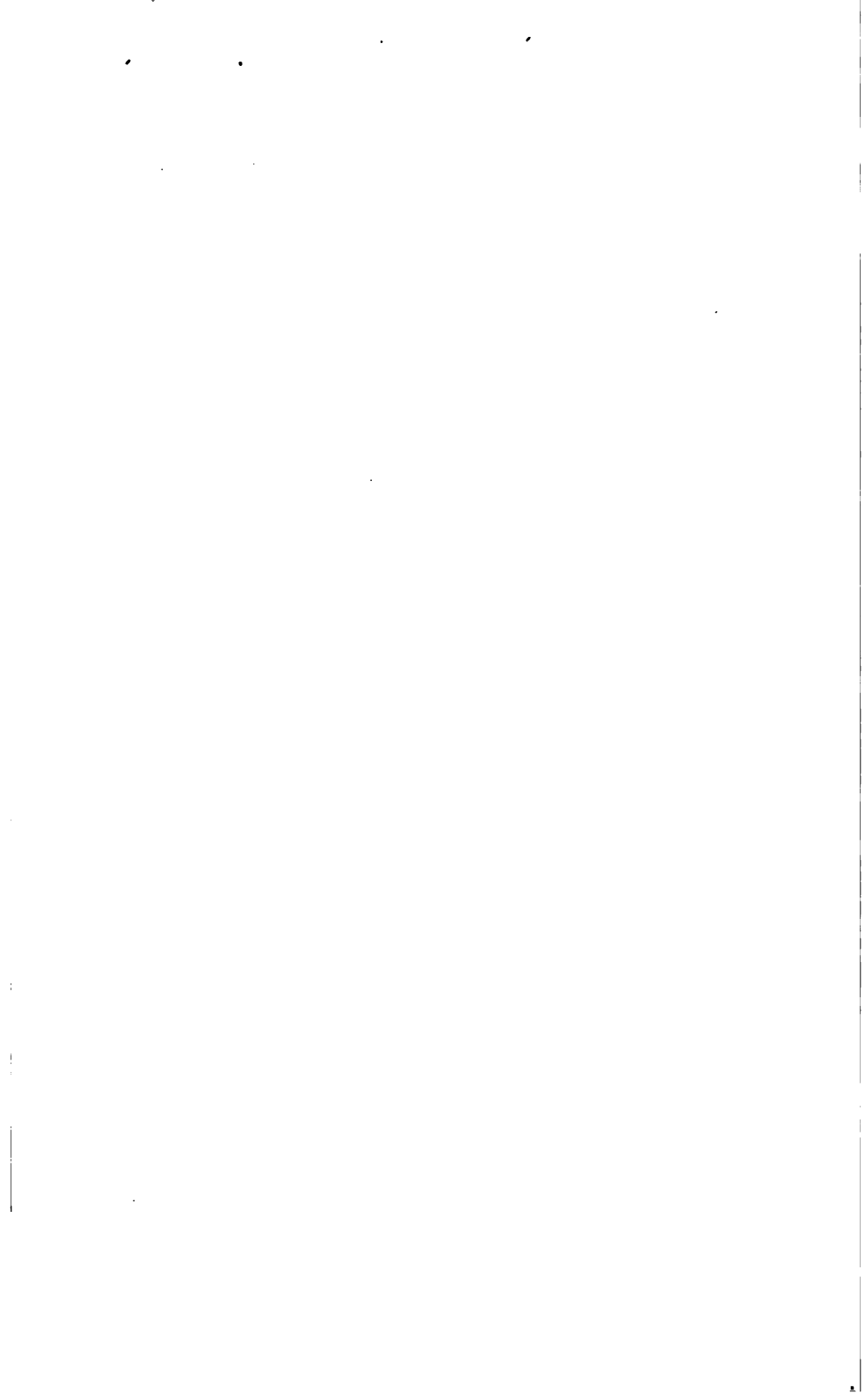
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REATA ; OR, WHAT'S IN A NAME.—PART VIII.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—A BROKEN HEART.

"I leant my back unto an aik,
I thought it was a trusty tree ;
But first it bow'd and syne it brak,
Sae my true love did lichtlie me."

—*Old Scottish Ballad.*

"Das Herz ist gestorben,
Die Welt ist leer."

—*SAPHIR'S Wilde Rosen.*

THE first surprise of her sudden appearance over, Reata had found a ready welcome at Steinbühl. Arnold had been the first to recover his presence of mind on that memorable evening. The event was unexpected, certainly, but not startling enough to justify such absolute stupefaction as was written on the old Baron and Gabrielle's faces. Here was this Fräulein Lackenegg they had been expecting a few days hence ; they had been prepared for the possibility of her being young, though not for the possibility of her being beautiful. Arnold had had, it is true, a theory of his own about this companion possibly turning out good-looking, but this was something different ; this was beauty such as he had seldom dreamt of, and never seen. The spare room

had rapidly been got ready, and the necessary arrangements for a new arrival quickly disposed. There was no time to kill a fowl, but yet the stranger was not left to starve ; supper was provided somehow or other.

However friendly one's sentiments may be towards a new and perfectly unknown arrival, constraint is unavoidable under such circumstances ; and in spite of all efforts at conversation, the supper had been a very silent meal. The old Baron's first impulse, when he had at last grasped the situation, had been to obtain a full and authentic account of the last actions, words, and looks of his beloved cousin Olivia. This Arnold had managed to avert : "For heaven's sake, father, can't you

wait till to-morrow? She looks tired and knocked up, and would probably begin to cry; women always do on these occasions, and then we should be in for a scene."

"Yes, yes, Arnold, I don't want to make her cry, certainly, poor thing; but I should just like to ask her whether dear Olivia did not send me any message at the last."

But Arnold would not hear of anything of the sort, and the Baron had been compelled to postpone his questions till next morning. When next morning came he took the earliest opportunity, on finding himself alone with her; but he did not get much satisfaction. At the very first word of his question, Reata turned her head away, and her answer was given in a hurried, nervous voice, "Please don't ask me to speak about it, Baron Bodenbach. I was not with her at the time, and I can tell you nothing."

"Oh yes, my dear, of course, I do not want to agitate you; but do just tell me this one thing—was her end sudden?"

"Yes, very sudden," she replied huskily, without looking at the old man. After this he asked no more questions about his cousin's death, which seemed to relieve Reata immensely.

That first day of her stay at Steinbühl was very quiet and eventless—except, indeed, that everything which Reata heard and saw was an event from its newness alone. The old Baron was shut up in his room; Arnold was away from the house; and so Gabrielle took upon herself the task of entertaining the new arrival. Reata allowed herself to be led about, and have all the lions of the place pointed out to her—the farmyard, the hole among the reeds, the stables, and the hen-house. Gabrielle quite dropped her invalid habits for the

day, and danced about the avenue and the garden, in her delight at being able to show them off to a stranger. For more than two hours the girls wandered about the grounds alone, except for Chéri and Fícha, who accompanied their respective mistresses. Gabrielle took her new friend round by the farm and the reeds first, and they came to the garden last—the shady, old-fashioned garden, with the weather-beaten wall and the budding lilac-bushes.

"There is our old castle I have been telling you about," cried Gabrielle, as they came in by the little iron gate, and pointing towards the summer-house at the extremity of the narrow garden-walks. "Let us see who can reach it first; I can run very fast." There were two walks leading there, both too narrow to admit easily of the passage of more than one person running. Gabrielle plunged into the nearest walk, not waiting for Reata's answer, and ran along lightly and quickly, screaming with the excitement of the race, like a child of ten years. Reata, with her Indian-like swiftness of step, had no need to put out her powers in order to outstrip Gabrielle's pace; by the time Gabrielle had reached the summer-house, panting and coughing, Reata was standing on its lowest step with Fícha by her side, hardly out of breath, with her lips only a little parted, a bright colour on her cheeks, and a bright light in her eyes, looking so radiant, and natural, and free—together so different from anything that Gabrielle had ever seen before—that she could not help exclaiming, even as she sank down breathless on the bench, "What a lovely colour you have got, and how pretty you are, Fräulein Lackenegg!"

"And how tired you are!" exclaimed Reata, bending down over Gabrielle, whose face had grown

pale again suddenly, after the passing flush of exercise; and she touched the younger girl's cheek with her fingers. "I should not have let you run like that," unconsciously assuming a tone of protecting authority. She had not been in the house twenty-four hours yet, but neither tone nor gesture seemed out of place; it appeared quite natural to her to speak to Gabrielle in that way, and quite natural to the motherless girl to be protected and caressed by her. She jumped up from her bench impulsively, and put her arms round Reata's neck. "I like you so much, dear Fräulein Lackenegg. You will be my friend always, won't you? and it is so nice to have a friend to live in the house, not only to come from time to time, like Hermine; and you will always remain with me, will you not?"

Reata had never had the companionship of a girl of her own age, and the offer of friendship, foolishly worded though it was, was very sweet to her. She smiled and kissed Gabrielle, and then a sudden serious shade came over her face, and she slowly put down Gabrielle's clinging arms from round her neck. "Yes, I will stay with you as long as you want me; I don't know how long that may be," and a curious smile lurked in the corners of her mouth. "But please don't call me Fräulein Lackenegg," she said, turning away and pulling off a little twig of the bush beside her; "call me Reata, and I will call you Gabrielle." Of course a joyful assent from Gabrielle's side. "How large the lilac-buds are getting! they will be out in a few weeks," said Gabrielle, presently.

"So this is lilac, is it?" looking at the twig with a new interest. "I have heard of your lilacs before, but I have never seen one growing."

"Dear me! you don't mean to

say so? never seen a lilac growing before? how funny! Are there no lilacs in Mexico? What sort of flowers have you got there?"

Mexico! The mention of it, just at that moment, sent Reata's thoughts back to the glories of her own dear forest; and sitting down on the bench, she glowed into an eloquent description of tropical beauties, making Gabrielle open her eyes wonderingly, and stare more and more at this strange, fairy-princess sort of creature, who had been accustomed to live among palm-trees, and was as familiar with humming-birds and monkeys as she herself was with the frogs in the Steinbühl marsh.

It is astonishing how quickly we get accustomed to anything new, to any feature which springs up freshly in our lives, however different it may be to what we have been used to, however startling it may have seemed in theory—let it be a departure, an arrival, a birth, a death. The infant of a few hours ago already seems to us as if it had always formed part of our family circle; the face of the friend who lies dead, as if it had never worn other than that rigid, awful expression.

By evening Gabrielle had made up her mind that Fräulein Lackenegg was quite as nice as Hermine Schwerendorf—ever so much prettier and more amusing—and that she was going to be her best friend.

When Reata, for the second time, opened her eyes to daylight at Steinbühl, the sun was shining brightly outside, and the trees and the grass, and the narrow garden-walks, seemed to invite her out as she stood at the window. It was an invitation she could not refuse; so she went out by herself after breakfast. Arnold had not been at breakfast that day; she had in

general seen very little of him yet—all her acquaintance consisting in sitting opposite to him at meals, and trying to trace in his face likenesses to Otto. Gabrielle did not come out with Reata ; her exertions of yesterday had tired her, and it was too early in the day for her to venture out from the house. Gabrielle was of a chilly nature, and had had the large porcelain stove in the sitting-room lit. Fícha, apparently, is of a chilly nature too, for when called upon by her mistress to come out walking, she is found luxuriously ensconced under the stove, for which she gets severely reprimanded, and threatened with all sorts of horrible diseases, if she persists in her course of perverse wrong-headedness.

"Where are you going?" called out Gabrielle, as Reata was leaving the room, followed reluctantly by Fícha, who threw a longing glance back towards the stove.

"To the garden."

"What are you going to do there?"

"Nothing particular, only take a little fresh air;" and then she closed the door and ran along the passage and down the house-steps, and paused on the gravel outside. How much chiller it was than it looked from the window! The sunshine had brightness, but no warmth in it yet: it was too early in the day, and too early in the season for that. The dew was hardly gone from the grass; both Fícha and her mistress, with their tropical blood, shivered as they stood on the gravel and looked about them. Reata had said to Gabrielle that she was not going to do anything in particular, but yet there was a purpose in her mind. She had a fancy to visit the garden again where Gabrielle had taken her yesterday, and to visit it alone; to sit on that old

stone bench, with the lilacs drooping over, and to dream of Otto. With the strange mixture of prose and poetry in her nature, she was setting out from the house with the clear intention of dreaming a day-dream, and she had settled upon all the details and surroundings among which she would dream.

The garden was deserted, of course; at this hour it always was. Later, when the sun grew warmer, the old Baron would come and pace up and down the walks; now there was nobody here, but at the far end a rustic youth, who combined the offices of groom and garden-boy in one, and who was now occupied in raking one of the distant paths.

"He won't disturb me much," thought Reata, as she turned in by the rusty iron gate, which creaked lugubriously on its hinges. The stable-boy looked up from his distant occupation, and then shaded his eyes with his hand, and stood staring at the lady till she had gone in among the bushes, and only her black dress could be seen through the twigs.

Yes, here was the stone bench, and here were the lilac-bushes, and here were all the surroundings necessary,—everything except the principal actor in the scene. When would he come? Gabrielle had said that the lilacs would be out in two or three weeks. "But I cannot wait so long for Otto; surely he will come before then!"

The birds are hopping about on the bushes in the morning sun; upon some of the higher ones there is angry chirping going on, evidently domestic quarrels. A blackbird paterfamilias flies close past Reata with a big red worm in his mouth. Fícha makes a feint of pursuit, and then, being baffled, goes and lies down on a bed of yellow crocuses in the sun. Reata has to interrupt her dream to go and expel "the

indiscreet Camel," as she terms her, and then spends a few minutes on her knees endeavouring, not very successfully, to make the flattened crocuses stand up again as before; after which she returns to her bench, and tries to resume her dream just where she had broken it off. When would he come? Surely he must know she is here? Why had none of them mentioned his name to her? "I wish I could talk about him, and ask about him; but I dare not. Gabrielle is too childish, and his brother looks so grave and stern. If I could speak quite unconcernedly, I would do it; but I know I should betray myself, and they must not guess till Otto comes; and then it will be all right, and no more mysteries. How glad I shall be!"

During these reflections, Fícha, who had been ordered to take her place on the bench beside her mistress, sat at the extreme edge of the stone, trembling ostentatiously, and holding up a limp white paw, so as to save, at least, *one* limb from contact with the cheerless stone.

Then Reata fell to wondering for the fiftieth time what Otto's first words would be. Their import, of course, she was sure of: but the words themselves, the very words, she would like to know. Would he gather a sprig of lilac and give it to her? Which sprig? And then she would put it into a book, and keep it to look at when she was as old as the old Baron, &c., &c., &c. Just then she started up from her bench and turned her head, but in the next minute sank down again disappointed. It was only Arnold passing at the far end of the garden towards the stables, and calling out some directions to the boy at work. He passed on into the house without seeing her. How like their two voices were! But how different Arnold was from

what she had expected! She liked his face in spite of its stern expression. Of course she could not help liking it for its resemblance to Otto. At the first, that resemblance had struck her very forcibly, but even after one day the likeness was fading. Yes, Arnold was different, everything was different—the house, the garden, the plants, the birds. Of course, how could she have pictured them aright? It had all been mere guess-work. The one thing that was not guess-work was Otto. Surely he would not be changed? Of course not; how could he be?

Another half-hour of blissful dreaming, to Fícha's infinite disgust. Sitting on a stone bench in the very beginning of April, in a climate that is not tropical, particularly when you have recently come from a climate that is tropical, is not comfortable or enjoyable in the long-run, even supposing you are lost in day-dreams; and Reata suddenly awoke with a shiver to the consciousness that Fícha was right, and that they had better go home. How cold it was! She was not accustomed to cold; everything was very different from what she had expected.

When Reata opened the door of the sitting-room, Gabrielle was kneeling on her sofa, holding something crumpled up in her hand.

"O Fräulein Lackenegg! O Reata! I have something delightful to tell you; such a grand piece of news!"

The warmth of the room was grateful after the chilly air, and Reata drew a chair near the stove and sat down. "Please don't make me guess," she said, taking off her hat and throwing it down on to the nearest table. "I never can guess anything."

At this moment Fícha, who was surreptitiously making towards the

stove, met her mistress's eyes fixed severely upon her, and skilfully altered her direction, so as to give the appearance of having only been contemplating a harmless little circle in the room.

"I will help you," went on Gabrielle. "It is about my brother."

"Then it is quite impossible for me to guess, I know so little about him."

"He is——" Gabrielle paused and raised herself higher, still holding the crumpled paper in her hands. "He is going to be married! There, now! what do you think of that?" she burst out, clapping her hands. "And I must be bridesmaid—I want to be bridesmaid. Papa says I may, if I am well enough, and"—with a sudden inspiration—"wouldn't you like to be bridesmaid too? Isn't it delightful? Aren't you glad?"

"Of course I am glad, if it pleases you all," said Reata, smiling across to Gabrielle, with her hands stretched towards the stove for warmth. "But I suppose you are not much surprised. When is it to be?"

"Oh, very soon," cried the other, excitedly.

"Then Otto will be coming soon," thought Reata to herself, her heart leaping at the thought. "I have heard of your future sister-in-law before, but I cannot remember her name. She is very fair, isn't she?"

"Yes; but who told you? How did you guess that?"

"Your brother Otto told me," said Reata, turning a little away, and pronouncing Otto's name for the first time since her arrival—trying to pronounce it with indifference, but feeling a conscious colour rising to her cheeks.

"Dear me, how funny! I quite forgot that you knew Otto also.

So he told you all about it when he was in Mexico? What else did he tell you about her?"

"That she is very handsome."

"Yes" (doubtfully). "And what else?"

"That her name is Hermine, or something like that. I forget the second name."

"No, not Hermine; you are thinking of Hermine Schwerendorf. Her name is Halka; she is a Pole. Isn't Halka a pretty name? It means Hélène, you know."

"A Pole? How does your brother come to know a Pole?"

"But the regiment is in Poland, near there. Papa says it is a very lucky chance for him."

"But he has left the army now, I thought?"

"No, he is in the army still," said Gabrielle, staring at her new friend wonderingly. "But, of course, he will leave it now, and I am so glad. It is always much more fun when he is here."

"But why doesn't he wear uniform, then?"

"But he always does; it was only for the journey that he didn't."

"But I certainly thought that he had quite left the army, and that he was going to marry that Hermine Schwerendorf."

"Oh dear, no; what a funny idea! It is Arnold who will marry Hermine, of course."

"But are you not speaking of your brother Arnold?" And Reata withdrew her hands from the stove, and leant back in complete bewilderment.

"Of Arnold!" in a tone of heightened surprise. "Of course not; how could it be Arnold? It is my other brother."

"But you haven't got another. Surely you have only got those two?"

Gabrielle, in her excitement, had

now left her kneeling position, and sat on the edge of the sofa, with her elbows leaning on the table, and a paper spread out before her. "Of course I have only got two brothers. Didn't you know that before?"

"Yes, I know that." Reata had risen from her chair, and had taken her hat off the table. She stood looking at Gabrielle in utter stupefaction. "But I don't understand you," she said at last. "If Baron Arnold is not going to be married, who is?"

"Why, Otto, of course."

"Otto——" she repeated the name mechanically, and it had a strange foreign sound in her ears; but not even yet did she quite grasp the truth. A thousand wild thoughts flitted through her mind. Had Otto written to tell them of his love for her? It hardly seemed so very unlikely at that moment. Were they not engaged to each other, despite those words of parting which had been said between them? How could a few dead words of writing part two living and loving hearts? "Otto going to be married?"

"Yes, and you thought it was Arnold the whole time — how funny!" And Gabrielle here indulged in a shrill peal of laughter.

"And to whom?" said Reata, coming a step nearer, and then stopping, with her hat still dangling in her hand, every feature of her face, every curve of her figure, fixed into immobility by the suspense of the moment.

"To Comtesse Halka Przeszechowska, of course," said Gabrielle, a little petulantly. "I don't know why you won't believe me."

"Oh, but that is a mistake—I know it is," with a gesture of disdain. Reata's voice was quite distinct and clear, but a sudden look of panic had come into her eyes.

"No, it is not a mistake," persisted Gabrielle, in a higher key.

Reata was standing by Gabrielle's side now; the hat had slipped from her fingers on to the floor. Standing as she was, and taller as she was, she was much higher than Gabrielle on the sofa; she put her hands on Gabrielle's shoulders, and looked down in her face with a look that in its intensity of inquiry frightened Gabrielle. "Why do you say so? Tell me at once; I must know."

"But I have told you," said Gabrielle, half crying with nervous fright. "Why do you look at me in that manner? Nobody ever looks at me like that, and I don't like it." She was scared by Reata's eyes and Reata's voice; all the rich fulness of tone was gone from it; it was strained to hardness.

"Who told you?" repeated Reata.

"There is the telegram, you can read it if you like; it came half an hour ago."

There was the telegram, to be sure, announcing in unmistakable terms Otto's engagement to Comtesse Halka Przeszechowska de Przeszechowice of Snyhynice, in East Galicia — the engagement which the day before had been generally made known at Blotów.

Reata read through the lines twice over,—the first time the words hardly conveying any distinct impression to her; the second time they became distinct all at once, so distinct that instantaneously her excitement of a moment ago changed into the desperate calmness of certainty—a calmness which is not natural, and which cannot last.

The first impulse of every creature stricken with a sudden wound, is to hide that it is wounded. Reata felt her knees trembling in a way they had never trembled

before, for she was not given to faintness. If she had been weak, or delicate, or sickly, or had not had the strength of youth and pride to hold her up at that moment, she would have given in, perhaps fainted straight off, or burst into tears, or gone into hysterics; but superbly organised as she was, and with that something in her which I do not know how to define, but which in an animal we would call *race*, she did nothing of the sort. She sat down on the nearest chair to conceal how unable she was to stand, and began asking some questions with an appearance of calmness which took in the not very far-seeing Gabrielle.

"Has your brother known this Comtesse Halka long?"

"Oh yes, ever so long." Gabrielle did not mind answering questions now that she was no longer under the immediate scrutiny of those dreadful dark eyes.

"Before he went to Mexico?"

"Yes, and papa wanted him to marry her a year ago already. Papa is always wanting both of them to marry."

"Why was your father so anxious for him to marry this lady?"

"Oh, she has got money, and her family is a very old one."

"Yes, I understand; and she is beautiful, I suppose?"

"No, at least Arnold says not; but fascinating and distinguished-looking, or something like that, I know he said."

"Rich and noble, and fascinating and distinguished," summed up Reata; "and young too, of course?"

"Young! oh no, not at all young—about seven-and-twenty, I believe; just Otto's age."

"And do you mean to say that he has been engaged to her all that time since last year?"

"No; of course he only got

really engaged to her yesterday, but everybody has known it all along, though of course we never could be quite sure that he would get her. There was a rich captain who was also trying for her, Arnold says. I am so glad she liked Otto best."

"How long is it since she liked your brother best?" Reata asked, sternly.

"Oh, for a long time. He danced and skated with her all this winter."

"All this winter?"

"Yes, all this winter."

"But you mean only since Christmas?"

"Oh no, for Arnold was there at the end of November, and there had been a ball a few weeks before, and the officers told him that he had hardly danced with any one but her; and Arnold said that he had never seen any one skate so well as Comtesse Halka Przechowska."

"Comtesse Halka Przeszechowska," corrected Reata. She knew every syllable of the long Polish name by heart already.

"I wish I were strong enough to skate, it must be so delightful; don't you think so?"

"No, I don't. I hate ice—I hate everything cold; I hate—I hate this country." The unnatural state of calmness was showing signs of giving way.

"Oh, but it isn't always as cold as to-day," said Gabrielle, beginning to perceive that her new friend was out of humour; "you will see how different everything looks at the end of the month, when the lilacs are out."

"I don't care for lilacs," and Reata shuddered visibly—"nor for crocuses either. I don't care for any flowers, only for cactuses."

"I wish I could give you cactuses," said Gabrielle, helplessly; "but we haven't got any here."

"No, nobody can give me what I want," replied Reata, with a gasp, and she stooped and picked up her hat, which still lay on the floor.

"But surely you would like to be bridesmaid with me? Only I am afraid that the same colours wouldn't suit us."

"No, of course they would not suit us," returned Reata, rather grimly, feeling even at that miserable moment how ludicrous the idea was. She bridesmaid instead of bride! A perception of the laughable sides of one's position will sometimes add to the torment at moments like these. Reata stood up from her chair; she could stand quite well now. A moment ago she had been cold, now she was hot; and only now was the real excitement of grief and anger beginning to work within her, and to make her heart beat fast. She had risen with the intention of leaving the room. She would walk quite slowly and quietly to the door, she told herself; and then the moment she was out she would run so fast, not to the garden, no, but somewhere else where they could not see her from the windows, where she could hide her miserable secret. She had moved two steps towards the door when it opened, and Arnold came in. She stopped; she would not go just yet; it would look as if she were running away. Otto's brother must not be allowed to see that there was any reason for her being ashamed; and she thought, as she stood there twirling her hat-strings, that because she could stand, and did not faint, and was not crying, that her secret was not written in her eyes and round about her trembling lips.

"But we could be dressed in different colours," exclaimed Gabrielle, returning, for the third time, to her brilliant notion of the

bridesmaids. "It would do quite well. I saw a wedding last year at Gratz, and one of the bridesmaids was dressed in pink, and the other in blue: it would be delightful, I assure you. Wouldn't it, Arnold?" And Gabrielle turned to her brother and tried to enlist his sympathies in favour of her plan.

Arnold looked at the paper that was spread on the table, and then at Reata's face; and it did not need much perception, after these symptoms, and from the various twos and twos which he had been putting together in his mind lately, to make a sum total, which led him to a tolerably correct guess at the state of the case.

"The cook is looking for you everywhere, Gabrielle. I suppose you have forgotten, as usual, to order the dinner," he said, rather sharply. Gabrielle, who evidently did not suspect anything, had better be got rid of. Then he walked to the window, and, with his back to Reata, appeared to be arranging something about one of the green window-blinds. He was very anxious to get out of the room again. Women must be far better alone under these circumstances, and he wouldn't have a notion what to do. What was expected of him? Ought he to speak to her? Make a commonplace remark, perhaps. It would look odd if he left the room without speaking; but then he remembered vaguely having heard that they break down if you say anything too kindly, and he could not well speak gruffly to her, or that might be still worse. So having decided that silence was the best course, and having made a few unnecessary knots on the string of the blind, he turned to go. He had his hand on the handle of the door, when Reata arrested him; she had come quite close up to him and put her fingers

for a moment on his coat-sleeve, so as to prevent his leaving.

"I want to speak to you, Baron Bodenbach."

Arnold shut the door again with a feeling of desperation, and, by his stiffest company-bow, intimated that he was at Fräulein Lackenegg's service.

"I want you to tell me when the next steamer goes."

"The next steamer to where, if I may ask?"

"To Mexico, of course," with an impatient movement of the head.

"But you are surely not going, are you?"

"Yes, I am. I—I cannot remain here any longer. I ought never to have come, and the climate doesn't agree with me. Please tell me when the steamer goes. I can find it out for myself, of course; but I think you might save me the trouble."

Arnold's thick eyebrows contracted very visibly. "Of course I will find out if you really wish it, but I hope that you may be induced to reconsider your resolution; it would look so very strange; people would think we had refused you hospitality: and also for yourself, don't you think it would appear rather——" he paused, at a loss for a word—"rather imprudent?" There was an emphasis on the last word which conveyed some of his meaning to her mind; she grew scarlet with vexation; she put up her head higher, as if to belie the colour that was coming and going so quickly in her face; her eyes were flaming wildly, and for a moment she set her teeth hard. She was very beautiful to look at, battling between anger and grief, and at this moment the anger in her face was greater than the grief. A pang of compassion for the suffering he saw moved Arnold; he felt that it would be more gener-

ous not to look again; he turned towards the window.

"Imprudent!" she repeated; "and whose business would that be? Nobody has any right to find fault with me."

"I wasn't venturing to find fault," answered Arnold, without turning round; "I was only suggesting." Then he added, more gently, "I really think that you had better give yourself a little more time; in a month you will be better able to judge if you like our climate, and whether you wish to remain here."

Even though she was excited, and off her balance, Reata could not help acknowledging to herself that his words had some sense in them; she did not like giving in, but neither did she contradict this time—she stood silent.

Arnold stood silent too, casting about for some convenient form of speech, by which he could make her understand that Otto was as yet unaware of her being in Europe. "If you are knocked up with the journey," he said, still without looking round, "you had better rest here for a few weeks: you will be quite undisturbed; nobody knows of your being here—not even my brother." And as he said it, Arnold felt an intense desire to look round, and see what new change would pass over her face now; those clouds, and gleams, and flashes, and that quickly rising, quickly ebbing colour were wonderfully interesting to watch. But compassion swayed over curiosity, and he did not see her look of amazement; she was far too much surprised to answer for a minute.

"Are you sure?" she said, breathlessly.

"Quite sure."

And then she came to a resolution, and spoke it quickly, without giving herself time for thought. "Baron Bodenbach, will you pro-

mise not to let your brother know that I am here? We did not—get on very well in Mexico—and—and—I think that he would not like to know that I am here.”

Arnold could almost have smiled at her words—at the poor, lame, faltering excuse, which could deceive no one, but which in her simplicity and her excitement she believed sounded plausible. He had to turn now; he could not well answer a question like that with his back to her. “Oh, of course,” he said, with conscious awkwardness of tone, “there is no necessity for telling him, and I hardly ever write to him at any rate.”

“Thank you,” she said, shortly. The anger had gone from her face; there were no tears on her cheeks yet; but they were not far off; they were trembling in her eyes and in her voice.

“Now would be the time to make a commonplace remark,” thought Arnold—feeling at the same time that to make a commonplace remark was the one thing he could not do just then; and before he had time to say another word she was gone from the room.

Once out of the house, and alone, all unnatural calmness, and all anger, made way for the natural burst of grief, to the rightful tears, which must come sooner or later, and come only the more bitterly for coming late. The first impulse of most women under these circumstances would be to lock themselves into their room, and throw themselves on their bed. Reata's first impulse was to get out into the air, under the open sky, and among trees and plants, where she could speak without being heard, and think without her thoughts being read. It was only half an hour since she had come down those steps last, since she had come out to dream that

day-dream which had had so rude a wakening: even while she had been sitting on that stone bench, thinking of Otto, he had already belonged to another; he was the rightfully affianced bridegroom of Comtesse Halka Przeczowska; she had had no right to think of him as her own. She hung her head in deep shame; this was the man she had come from the other end of the world to look for—this was the love she had thought would be hers for lifetime!

“My heart is broken!” she said, with a sob, when the first flood of relieving tears was past. She was alone among the fruit-trees, at the far end of the field behind the house. The apple-blossoms were beginning to open their pink-tinted petals on the branches above her. For hours she remained thus, sitting at the foot of one of the trees, or wandering about between them—the hot anger and pain within her making her insensible to the chilly April air; hiding herself and her misery from the eyes of her fellow-creatures, but telling all the little world of nature around her that her heart was broken and her life was blighted. She said it to the apple-blossoms, and to the dandelions in the grass; she told it to two yellow butterflies, the first spring butterflies, that came flitting past her. “Ah! it is all very well for you to flutter about in the sunshine, but my heart is broken, quite broken; and even if one of you is faithful, the other will find a second butterfly to flutter with; but I am not a butterfly, and I will never be consoled, and I will not die like you this summer, you heartless unfeeling things; I will probably live for forty years more—forty years, all alone, without anybody to care for me!”

It was the bitterest day that had come to Reata's life yet; but

it is an ill wind that blows no one good. All that day Fícha lay under the stove in the sitting-room with impunity. Nobody attempted to dislodge her from that

enviable position, even though her woolly coat was getting hot and singed, and her small black nose baked into a semblance of parchment.

CHAPTER XXIX.—THE HEAVY-DRAGOON BROTHER.

"Of comfort no man speak;
Let's talk of graves, of worms, and epitaphs."
—*King Richard II.*

When a heart young and strong—young in years and in experience, and strong in its self-reliance—receives its first blow, the shock and the pain it brings with it is the crisis of its life. It is at moments like these that the fate of a woman decides itself; whether the heavy trouble will soften and elevate her, or harden and turn her back upon life embittered, with a great burning longing for revenge, with an unreasoning wish to take away from some other human heart the happiness she has lost. These are the times when the teachings of childhood, whether for good or for evil, even though they have lain unfelt for years, come to the surface and decide this all-important question. Strong natures in general suffer more acutely at the moment—the very force of their vital energy will make them feel a wound more deeply, but it will also help them to bear up under the blow again; a weak nature will, beneath the same affliction, be numbed or stupefied, or sink at once, never to rise again. But all natures, whether weak or strong, if only they have the capacity of loving and of suffering, will be shattered for a time, and the world will seem to them a different thing from what it was before. And so it seemed to Reata now; the more so, because of the strong romantic side of her nature, which had hitherto invested everything about her with the attributes

of poetry. Perhaps she deserves no pity, for has she not meddled with the strings of fate? She had no right to tempt her destiny, and no right to expect from life more than it was ready to give; only the right of a young heart with its foolish over-confidence in itself and in others, which requires to be pruned down, which always is pruned down, no matter how sharp the pin or how rough the shock—the hardest lesson which life has to teach, but the most necessary. To some of us this pruning comes sooner, to some later; to some by gradual filings, to some by one bitter cut: and perhaps those who get over this rude awakening suddenly are the most mercifully dealt with; it is better to see one's idols shattered by one blow, than to watch them crumbling into dust.

After all, Reata reflected, the first bewilderment of her new position over, she had been spared that sharpest of all stings for a woman, the sting of being jilted. She had given away her happiness with her own hand; and now that she wanted it back, now that she would put out her hand to take it, see, it was gone. Otto had not been faithless to her, in the strict sense of the word; everybody would tell her that—her own sense told it her. The fault was really on her side; it was only that she had taken love for more than it is

worth. She had rated all man's love too high. How could she for a moment have supposed that a man would prefer love to fortune? With her new-born wisdom she could almost have laughed at herself for having been such a simpleton. But her pride was not extinct yet; she would rather not be loved at all, she told herself, than be loved only second to fortune; and if her fate had been lying in her hand, and she could have had her faithless lover back, she would not have taken him.

How she got through those next few days she hardly knew. After the first day she did not hide herself; she kept up appearances, and no one but Arnold had guessed at the truth. The first excitement subsided, she had fully acknowledged to herself that he had been right in opposing her insane notion of instant departure. As soon as she could do so without exciting surprise, of course she would go. She would bury herself in a convent for the rest of her life; there could be no doubt that that was her only course. In the meantime, she must keep up her dignity, and try to look as if nothing had occurred; no one should guess what a blighted heart she carried within her. It should not be said that she was mourning for a man who had forgotten her so easily. Her pride, her Mexican blood, would come to her help, she kept repeating to herself; and, strangely enough, her pride, or her Mexican blood, or nature, or all three together, did come to her help, so effectually that she was actually able to eat and sleep, and play her part tolerably in the little family circle. And she did more than this; there was a craving for movement and action within her, which pushed her to seize upon every occupation which came within her

reach, whether practical or unpractical, foolish or the reverse. Anything to smother the sense of humiliation, anything to turn her thoughts aside from it for a while; anything to produce new interests, new sensations, the more different from former experiences the better; the greater the call upon physical exertion, the more congenial it would be. She went at everything with feverish energy; there was much scope for this at Steinbühl, for under Gabrielle's supervision many things had run wild. But Reata's energy did not always come in conveniently; it was not the desire to make herself useful that pressed her on, it was the mere physical need of movement, which would equally have prompted her to form charity-schools or dance *tarantelas*, according to the opportunities which offered themselves. She could bear anything except inaction, sitting still, and being obliged to think, or having to hear any allusion to the event which had blighted her life. Her hardest moments of trial were when the old Baron would begin expatiating on his delight at his son's engagement, declaring his unmitigated satisfaction, and often addressing his raptures directly to her. It frequently occurred, in moments like these, that Reata, when she felt her calmness giving way, would leave the room abruptly, running out to cool herself in the air, and to struggle with her tears alone.

A week, ten days had passed; the weather was waxing fair and the sun warm. Fresh batches of apple-blossoms broke into bloom daily; the two yellow butterflies had been followed by more yellow butterflies, and by white and by brown butterflies, so that if any of them were faithless the loss would easily be remedied. On the

surface of the pools, among the marsh grasses, the frog-spawn floated in masses, like milk-white glass, with its myriads of little black dots, each dot a future frog. The Canadian creeper on the balcony was beginning cautiously to put out its first little rolls of leaves; the yellow crocuses had now opened out their bleached cups, too wide for beauty; and the lilac-buds were growing daily fatter and fatter, and a faint reddish tinge was spreading over them. All these changes Reata marked and followed—all, that is, except the progress of the lilac-buds; for the lilacs grew only in the garden, and she had never been in the garden since that fatal morning. How could she ever go there again? She hated the very thought of the stone bench, and the summer-house, and the creaking iron gate—they would all remind her of that day. The old Baron always took his walk there, in the centre gravel-walk, between eleven and twelve; and Arnold passed through there sometimes on his way to the stables, or stood for half an hour at the further end, giving directions about the kitchen-gardening: but neither Reata nor Gabrielle walked there now; Gabrielle because she followed suit to what Reata did, and Reata because of her repugnance.

"I wonder what sort of convent I shall go into?" said Reata aloud, one morning, as she leant out of the window of her bedroom. "I think I should like to be a 'Sister of Charity,' but they are not bound for lifetime, and that would never suit me: no, I think it must be 'Trappists,' or 'Carmelites,' or any of those orders who dig their graves and never speak a word. How delightful it must be to do hard work like that!" And Reata, in default of her grave, fell a wishing that she could apply herself to digging up a potato field, or mowing down a

meadow. "I suppose they wouldn't let me cut down trees," she said, doubtfully; "and perhaps I mightn't be strong enough, and perhaps they mightn't like it when they were cut down; but surely there are other things that one can do. Why can I not clip yew-hedges into peacocks and foxes, like those we were reading about the other day in the life of Marie Antoinette? There is a piece of yew-hedge here behind the haycocks; I think I could quite well get two peacocks and a fox out of it with a little management. I shall begin it to-day." And accordingly Reata did set to work that same day, having first obtained from the Baron *carte-blanc* to do with the yew-hedge what she liked. "Oh yes, my dear, anything you choose," said the old man; he had become fond of the girl already, although every now and then her odd way of saying and doing things startled him.

He was rather startled at the moment, for Reata, having knocked at the door and obtained admission, had walked straight up to where he sat reading his paper, and said, "May I clip the yew-hedge behind the farm?"

"Anything you choose," repeated the old Baron, not very clearly understanding what was going to be done to the hedge. "Anything that amuses you: I want you to consider this place as quite your home, after all I owe to my dear cousin Olivia."

But Reata, not waiting to hear more about his cousin Olivia, had quitted the room like a flash. "Amuses me!" she repeated bitterly to herself; "as if anything could ever again amuse me now: how little they all know!" and she began collecting all the scissors she could manage to get together out of her own and Gabrielle's work-boxes—five pairs in all.

When she had worked for an hour and a half, and had broken three of her pairs of scissors, and her fingers were getting sore, she began to find that clipping hedges was easier in theory than in practice, and sat down for rest on an old grinding-stone which lay here useless and unheeded and moss-overgrown, and which had probably lain here for years. It was very fatiguing of course, she acknowledged to herself, as she pulled off her hat and allowed the breeze to cool her heated forehead: all her pulses were throbbing with the exertion, and she panted a little. But then fatigue was what she wanted just then—it did her good—and by-and-by she would have plenty of rest in the quiet cloister, with nothing to do but to say prayers and ring bells all day; “and it can’t be difficult to ring bells—at least I think not,” she added, doubtfully; “one never can know till one has tried. I should have thought it was easy to clip hedges too, but I daresay it would be easy if one had the right things—it is rather difficult with little embroidery scissors. But I won’t give up the peacocks and the fox yet; there must be some way of making them, if only one had the right kind of shears. I suppose one could get them at any country town.”

It was late in the afternoon; the ill-treated yew-hedge was beginning to throw a long shadow over the grass; the half-consumed haystacks were throwing longer shadows on the grass and on each other; the old farm-buildings not far off were throwing the longest shadows of all, and the broadest.

“It is ten days now,” mused Reata, “since my life came to an end. I suppose I should have died long ago if I had not had my Mexican blood to keep me up. It is fortunate for me that I have got

that to keep me up, and he shall never know what I have suffered.”

The gate of the farmyard close by was standing ajar, and a large Cochinchina cock came stalking out, followed timidly by two or three hens, quite as curious but less bold than their pasha. The three cows which belonged to the Bodenbach establishment—two brown and one speckled—were coming across the field homewards, with large metal bells hung round their necks, driven in a weak indulgent fashion by a small boy, and lingering every now and then to crop another tuft of the meadow-grass.

“What is he doing now, I wonder? Not thinking of me, of course—he has probably forgotten my existence. But oh, Otto, how I would have loved you, if you only would have been true to me!” And Reata flung away a twig of the yew which she had been holding, and dashed her hand over her eyes suspiciously. And then she began drawing pictures in her mind of what the Polish Comtesse was like—the woman who was her rival, and who had taken her place.

“Rich, noble, fascinating, and distinguished; does she love him, I wonder? And to think that he was dancing with her in November! how could he write to me as he did? How could I be the fool to believe him? Are all other women such fools as I am? Was he playing with me, and meant to marry her the whole time? And now that fascinating, aristocratic, rich, not so young rival of mine, is exulting over her triumph and my defeat!” Saying which, Reata sprang to her feet with a heightened colour in her face, with both her hands clenched, and stamped twice running, on the grass, in a way which made the cock and hens flutter nervously, and the two brown cows and the speckled one, that had

come across the meadow, turn their heads and gaze at her in surprise. She sat down again upon her stone, and clasped her two hands together round her knees—a favourite attitude of hers when thinking.

"And it all looked so real at the time, and yet it was only comedy; how can a comedy be so like truth? I suppose it was only because I was foolish and inexperienced, and did not know men; another woman would never have believed him: but I have got wise now—very wise," and Reata shook her head at the speckled cow, which had turned aside to get a last mouthful of the sweet grass that grew under the yew-hedge. "How much better it will be to be in a convent, and never have to speak to a man again—nothing but nice quiet nuns!" And just as Reata had come to this conclusion she perceived that there was, as that very moment, a man coming over the meadow, along the same path which the cows had taken. The man was Arnold returning from some of the further fields, and on his way home to the house. Arnold had a very keen eyesight, but the setting sun was right in his eyes now, and until the farm-buildings came between him and the dazzling rays, he did not perceive that there was anybody at that end of the field; then he looked up and saw Reata sitting on the old grinding-stone between the haystacks and the yew-hedge, with her hands clasped round her knees, and with the cock and hens pecking in the grass around her. He was not much surprised at seeing her, for during this last week he had often in the course of his daily rounds come across her in all sorts of unexpected places, at all sorts of hours, and in all sorts of weathers; for instance, at the top of the wall at the end of the grounds, under the old shed where the farming

implements were kept, and, I am ashamed to say, had once stumbled upon her in the hayloft, sitting half buried in the hay, and with Fieha lying half buried beside her. On most of these occasions Arnold had passed on discreetly, without disturbing her reflections; but that time in the hayloft he had been so taken aback at the moment at the unexpected *rencontre* that he had said a few words expressing his surprise, and betraying by his tone how shocked he was at the whole proceeding, for it was very evident that she could only have got there by the ladder.

As Arnold came along the path towards her, Reata felt a shade of annoyance at being disturbed. She had not forgiven him that tone of shocked surprise the other day in the hayloft; and ever since that time last week—that day when she had betrayed some of her agitation before him (that she had betrayed her secret she did not guess)—she was conscious of a feeling of shame in his presence. If only he would pass now without stopping, without looking at the hedge,—for there was also an unacknowledged dread within her lest Arnold should perceive what her occupation had been, and she was not in a humour to have supercilious remarks made about it. The hedge, however, was not likely to betray anything, being as yet quite innocent of the smallest approach to either a peacock or a fox: there was nothing perceptible, except a little extra scragginess at one part. Arnold came along, raised his hat to her, and would have passed, but just at that moment his eye was caught by something in the grass,—something bright upon which a ray of the setting sun was falling. He stooped and picked it up—a pair of scissors, presumably *Fräulein Lackenegg's* work-scissors. She had taken her

embroidery out here, he supposed, and had dropped them. To be sure, it was an odd place for working, among the haystacks, and there was no work visible anywhere ; but he had already learnt that Fräulein Lackenegg liked odd places, and especially that she had a weakness for hay, and he supposed she had her embroidery in her pocket.

"You have dropped your scissors," he said, handing her these, and as he held them out towards her he saw that her eyelashes were wet.

"Thank you," she said, coldly, feeling conscious that four other pairs of scissors were lying strewn about, and hoping that he would not catch sight of them. It struck him that she was looking a little pale.

"It is too cold for you to sit here, Fräulein Lackenegg," he said, in the same decisively authoritative tone which he invariably used towards Gabrielle ; "you are not accustomed to the variances of our climate."

"Thank you, I am quite warm," returned Reata, beginning to shiver, for the last warmth of the sun had nearly died out.

"Just as you please," said Arnold, in the tone of a man who, witnessing a piece of childish folly, does not think it worth reasoning about ; and turning away, he would have left Reata to her own foolish devices, had not his heel struck sharply against something metallic. He stooped to investigate, and discovered a second pair of scissors, this time a pair of stout nail-scissors, lying concealed among the vigorous sprouts of a young nettle. Reata saw his eyebrows contracting, and fancied she detected an expression of amused wonder in his eyes ; so drawing herself up straighter, she received the nail-scissors with impassible dignity.

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In the meantime the hens and the cock had drawn nearer, and, evidently under the delusion that a sort of rustic picnic on a small scale was going on here, screwed their eyes about in hopes of discovering some of the *débris* of the feast. While Reata took the nail-scissors from Arnold's hand, and laid them down on the grinding-stone beside the little stumpy embroidery - scissors, there suddenly arose a clamorous dispute between two of the hens,—a discovery of some importance which each was claiming as her right : angry chucking and shrill cackling, the antagonists were beginning to come from words to blows, or rather to pecks : their lord and master steps in with the unquestionable authority which belongs to him by right, and the cooler masculine judgment which is his natural gift. The two antagonists step aside, and readily and meekly agree to abide by his decision, confident that no question is too knotty for his unerring wisdom. So the cock thought himself, but seeing the state of the case he is puzzled for once. What can he do, what could any cock that ever came out of an egg do, with this piece of hard shining steel ? and how was he to conceal his perplexity from the two expectant hens who stood patiently waiting till he should find it good to divide the prize fairly between them ? Never was cock in such a position before : into what embarrassing straits do women bring us sometimes ! The two meek pair of eyes are fixed upon him, he screws his head round to an excruciating angle, twinkling his orange eyes sagaciously and chucking softly to himself in order to gain time. Then all at once the question is solved, and his dignity saved most unexpectedly ; the great two-legged giant standing not far off strides

up, dispersing the pasha and his two wives, and carrying off the bone of contention from under their very beaks.

Reata watched Arnold as he strode off, and stooped down, and then strode back again, and knew what was coming: "He is going to laugh at me, and I will not stand it; I will not be laughed at:" and she steeled herself, and put out her hand with an increase of dignity that was almost majesty to receive the half-pair of scissors, which he tendered to her gravely, but with a very decided inclination for laughter in his eyes. As she turned her head to avoid the recognition of this, her glance fell straight upon another half of another pair of scissors, lying close under the hedge; and with a nervous apprehension lest his quick eyes should discover it too, and possibly some other half pairs and whole pairs which she knew would not be lying very far off, she rose quickly to her feet, and placing herself skilfully between Arnold and the hedge, so as to screen the object of her apprehension from him, she announced her intention of going back to the house. "It is not at all because I feel cold," she explained for his benefit, "but only because Gabrielle will be wanting me."

Arnold, who was attentively considering the tumble-down grinding-stone from which she had risen, made no answer to this. "Did you think you would be able to sharpen your scissors on this old thing? You would find it rather a difficult matter," he remarked, with a contemptuous look at the moss-overgrown stone. "There is a boy down in the village who will sharpen all your scissors for you for a few kreutzers."

"You are quite mistaken if you think that my scissors need sharpening."

"Not? I imagined that that was your object, from the extraordinary amount there seems to be of them about the place."

"I was not sharpening the scissors," answered Reata, loftily; "I was clipping the hedge."

"Oh, really?" in an accent that was irritating in its incredulity.

"You have no objection, I suppose; your father gave me leave."

"No earthly objection," said Arnold, contemplating the hedge from under his eyebrows. "There does not seem much chance of harm being done."

"Oh, there is nothing yet to be seen; I have only just begun—wait till it is finished!" this last phrase with a ring of anticipated triumph.

"And what will it be like then?"

"There are going to be two peacocks and one fox, like those we read about the other evening."

"Oh, indeed!" with another contraction of the eyebrows. "I don't think the three animals will have fair-play on these few feet of hedge if they are to be anything like life size."

"They are to be larger than life, —heroic size," disdainfully, "and they will have plenty of room. I have measured the space accurately. Perhaps the fox's tail will have to be rather shorter than I should have liked, but that won't signify."

"Won't he look rather like a terrier in that case?" suggested Arnold, gravely; but again she was conscious of something of raillery in his expression.

"I will not be treated like a child," she said to herself. "Not in the least like a terrier," she was beginning, when all at once her hitherto carefully preserved dignity gave way, and, irresistibly struck by the absurdity of the whole thing, she broke into a long merry

laugh—the first she had laughed since that fatal day last week, the first Arnold had heard from her. Were it not for the drawing infection of mirth which moves one to join too, her laugh was a thing one would sooner hold one's breath and listen to, for its very beauty, for the young fresh gladness in its rippling tones. Arnold laughed and listened, and listened again, and it seemed to him a new experience. What a child she was in spite of her twenty-two years—a child in her gravity, a child in her merri-ment! But Reata drew herself up suddenly, remembering that it was unseemly of her to laugh when her heart was blighted. "I am going home now—poor Gabrielle has been waiting for me all this time;" but after that laugh she could not regain the same height of dignity she had occupied before, and they walked homewards in tolerably amicable conversation.

"Perhaps I will require something stronger than my scissors," she remarked, reflectively, as they neared the house; "I suppose one can get shears in the next country town?"

"Then you have not given up your projects about the hedge yet?"—an emphasis on the yet.

"Certainly not; why should I have given it up? Do you think I am a butterfly, or—or—a baby, to change my mind so soon?" Then as Arnold did not reply to the question, she continued, "Can you lend me the dog-cart to-morrow?"

"The dog-cart!" repeated Arnold, in astonishment; "what for?"

"Yes, the dog-cart, to drive in to G——, and get myself garden-shears."

"You mean to drive yourself?" inquired Arnold, looking and feeling staggered.

"Most certainly."

"Are you speaking seriously?"

"Perfectly seriously; why should you imagine I am joking?"

"You would find it a very different thing driving a dog-cart from one of the vehicles you are accustomed to."

"But I am not accustomed to any vehicles. I have never driven anything in my life before; but I suppose there can be no particular difficulty in getting a horse to go along a straight road, if you know how to keep hold of the reins—and I know I can do that, because I can ride."

"And you really imagine that you could go from here to G—— and back again, all by yourself?"

"What can possibly prevent me? Didn't I come from Mexico, quite alone?"

"Because you have done one foolish thing, that is no reason why you should do a second, especially when there is anybody to prevent you making yourself ridiculous."

All Arnold's ideas of seemliness and conventional propriety were aghast, and there was a little excuse for him if he somewhat forgot the courtesy due to a lady. Ridiculous! What woman can stand such an imputation for a moment? she would rather be called heartless or bad-tempered. Reata flared up instantly.

"I suppose that means, in other words, Baron Bodenbach, that you find it convenient to refuse to lend me your dog-cart," she said, hotly.

"Construe my words as you choose," he said, equally hotly; "but for such a purpose I certainly do refuse to lend my dog-cart." And then without a parting salutation they separated abruptly,—he striding off towards the back door, with his swinging military step, and she springing up the front steps of the house.

"Well, how is the hedge getting on?" asked Gabrielle, as Reata en-

tered the sitting-room a little disturbed.

"Not very well; I broke most of the scissors, and I wanted to drive to-morrow to G—— to get garden-shears, but your brother got into a temper about it, and won't lend me his dog-cart;" and Reata flung down the two and a half pairs of scissors on to the table. "It is a great shame, for I might have had a peacock finished this week. How could he say that I would make myself ridiculous by driving alone into G——? He is so accustomed to helpless European ladies that he cannot understand any one being able to take care of herself."

"Did you really want to drive alone?"

"Of course I did."

"Oh, then, that is what made Arnold angry. I heard him saying the other day to papa that he was horrified at the idea of your having come alone from Mexico, and that he found it highly improper."

"The very same thing that his brother said," muttered Reata, between her teeth. "How ridiculous they all are! Ridiculous!" she repeated aloud, giving a defiant toss to her head.

"Oh, Arnold is always so dreadfully severe, he never lets me do anything I like," said Gabrielle. "Otto is so much nicer—don't you think so?"

"Oh, so much nicer!" thought Reata, with a fresh pang of regret, but she did not answer, and walked to the other end of the room. Otto would not have told her she was ridiculous, or answered her so roughly. He had been quite right in saying that his brother was different from himself; his eyebrows were very bushy, and he had quite the stamp of a heavy-dragoon man. Reata had never seen a heavy dragoon in her life, but that did not matter. Ah, yes! Otto was so courteous, so clever, so amusing, so handsome, so everything that a man should be,—everything except—true!

"But perhaps Arnold will get you the shears," said Gabrielle, not receiving any answer to her last remark; "he must be going in soon again."

"Thank you, I am not likely to ask another favour, just now, from your brother," replied Reata, drily: "from your heavy-dragoon brother," she added, mentally.

CHAPTER XXX.—THE MEXICAN MAIL.

"If you have any letters for your friends in Mexico you will have to write them to-day; they must be posted to-morrow, in order to catch the mail," Arnold said to Reata, one morning across the breakfast-table. She started a little as she looked up from her coffee-making, and answered, "Yes, I will write; I had almost forgotten."

No changes in the last two days, except that Arnold had driven into G—— in his dog-cart, and had come back, not bringing any shears

for Reata, but having purchased a horse for his own use, in place of the old cob which hitherto had done double duty as riding and driving horse. Arnold was not exactly excited perhaps, but elated, and satisfied with his new acquisition, and impatient for its arrival next day. In the farmyard, too, there had been some slight acquisitions, not much influencing any one of the family, but still events in their own small way. Numberless chickens had been hatched, and one brood of turkeys was considered

particularly fine; the speckled cow was rejoicing in the possession of a speckled calf, and was quite as elated and satisfied as was Arnold.

The fox and the peacocks had died a natural death, seeing the little encouragement they were likely to meet with. The subject had not been alluded to again between Reata and Arnold, but she had found three more half-pairs and one whole pair of rusty scissors laid beside her work-box one morning, and she knew that this must have been his doing.

"The Mexican mail goes on Saturday," said Arnold to his father that day after breakfast, having followed him into his smoking-room. "I had very nearly forgotten it too."

"Oh, but Reata will get her letters ready in time," said the Baron; "she can't have many to write, for she told me the other day that all her relations in Mexico are dead."

"I was not thinking of Fräulein Lackenegg, I was thinking of ourselves," said Arnold, with a look of preoccupation on his face.

"But what have we got to do with Mexico, now that poor Olivia is——"

"We have got a great deal to do with Mexico," his son interrupted. "You know, father, I have spoken to you once or twice about this before. It is now six weeks since we got the first news of my aunt's death, and it is quite time now that we should have heard something more from the lawyers."

"But we shall hear soon enough, no doubt, Arnold,—too soon," with a deep sigh.

"I can't understand," mused Arnold aloud, "why this Le-Vendeur has not communicated with us sooner—a matter which touches our interests so nearly. Of course she must have left a will; and although

her fortune could not come our way, still there must have been considerable personal property to dispose of, and we are her nearest relations. An awful bore it is, certainly, that getting an answer takes such a time. I wish I had thought of writing sooner, but I never doubted to hear by this last mail."

"But there are so many accidents, Arnold; remember the letter may have got lost. I recollect a letter which I wrote to some one or other twenty years ago going astray, and never turning up again."

"No doubt; but postal arrangements have improved since twenty years; and if a letter has gone astray, the more reason that I should write."

"Oh, write by all means, if you think it better; and I certainly should like to get more details about poor Olivia's last moments. I have spoken to Reata once or twice about it, but she always gets so upset at once, poor thing, when I mention the subject; and she says, you know, that she was not with her at the time."

"Yes, Fräulein Lackenegg seems in general to prefer avoiding the subject," remarked Arnold, reflectively; "the mention of it always disturbs her very much."

"But that is quite natural; she must have been very much attached to my poor cousin Olivia."

"Perhaps," said Arnold, dubiously; and then, after a pause, "It is strange, certainly, that the only intimation of my aunt's death should have been that letter of Fräulein Lackenegg's and the enclosed certificate of burial."

"There now," said Arnold to himself, on the following forenoon, as he was sealing up a long letter written upon thin white paper edged with black, "that will clear up matters soon. Let me see,—

it is the middle of April now; by the middle of June I must get an answer, even if we do not hear before."

While Arnold in his father's writing-room had been covering his thin sheets of paper, Gabrielle and Reata in the sitting-room were talking and working with the windows open. Reata's work dropped in her lap pretty often, and her eyes wandered to the open window, or every now and then to the pictures on the wall.

"Who is that lady with the blue brocaded dress and the fuzzy hair?" she asked Gabrielle.

"Oh, that is one of our ancestresses—I don't exactly know when she lived—also an Olivia Bodenbach."

"Ah! another Olivia!" said Reata, leaning forward and puncturing the table with the point of her needle. "How horribly stern she looks! If one had a bad conscience, it would be enough to make one feel nervous."

"But you have not got a bad conscience, have you? and that Olivia Bodenbach was really a very good woman, I believe."

"Well, I suppose it is only her eyebrows that make her look so stern. So she was good, was she?"

"Yes, and her husband broke her heart and tormented her to death, and he used to hold her out of the window by her back hair; at least he did so once when he was in a rage."

"Then I think the picture must have been taken after she was held out of the window. That would be enough, I should think, to sour one's temper for life. And where is her husband?"

"Oh, he is in the drawing-room: he is in much better preservation, and far too good for this room."

"You must show him to me afterwards; I am anxious to make his

acquaintance: he must have had some character."

"Yes, I will show him to you afterwards,—and his father is there too. It was he, you know, who invented our motto; at least he did something in a battle once, and got his head cut off, and was given it as a reward."

"Oh, that was a reward, was it?" said Reata, drily; then leaning her elbows on the table, she went on reflectively, "*Sangre pur ne puyx faillir.*"

"Yes, you know it? How funny that you should have heard it over there! I suppose aunt Olivia told it you. That is uncle Max, you know," and Gabrielle pointed towards the small dingy painting of Maximilian Bodenbach which hung next to the blue brocade lady. Reata turned her eyes quickly from the window to the picture.

"What is that? is that Mr Boden? I fancied it was, but was not sure," and she got up, dropping her work on the floor, and went close to the picture for a nearer view.

"Is it like him?" asked Gabrielle.

"Yes, no—I mean there is some likeness," answered Reata, hurriedly, and turning her head still more away from Gabrielle. "Of course he was much older when—when I saw him." While she was still standing before the picture, Arnold came into the room.

"Papa wanted to have a new frame made for it, and have it varnished, and that hole in the left ear repaired; but Arnold said that was all stuff and rubbish."

"Did you?" said Reata, turning round suddenly with a swift flash passing through her eyes.

"I daresay I did," he answered, coolly. "The painting is really such a wretched daub that it is not worth spending fifty kreutzers upon."

"And that is what you call gratitude!" Reata had sat down again, and resumed her work.

"I never pretended to call it anything of the kind. Of course we were all very glad to get the money, but there was nothing so very surprising about it, considering how nearly related we were. But what has that got to do with a piece of sentiment like framing a picture?"

Reata stitched on in silence for a minute, and then raising her head and dropping her hands into her lap, she said abruptly—

"I suppose you owe him a grudge because of the conditions of the will?"

Arnold was taken aback; he had not supposed that Fräulein Lackenegg knew anything about the conditions of the will, otherwise she would hardly have been so simple as to suppose that Otto would marry her, for this was the upshot in Arnold's mind of all his observation.

"The conditions of the will!" he repeated, with a slight degree of haughtiness in his tone; "I really am at a loss to understand your meaning."

"I thought perhaps that you mightn't like the sermon which is preached to you in it on the subject of purity of blood."

"It was certainly superfluous in my case." The light stress on the "my" irritated Reata beyond measure. "But I most thoroughly coincide with the principles upon which this condition is based."

"Oh yes; I remember now hearing that you were——" She broke off and her colour rose, well aware that he must know from whom her information must have come.

"Remember hearing what?" asked Arnold, growing impatient.

"That you were—that you had—no, that you were—very old-

fashioned and aristocratic in your ideas."

Arnold calmed down instantaneously at this: it was rather a compliment to him than otherwise to be called an old-fashioned aristocrat, even if it had not been intended as such.

"Of course, Fräulein Lackenegg," and he drew up his figure a little straighter, "it is not surprising that you should take a different view of the matter;" and again there was an emphasis, however slight, on the pronoun, which acted like a sting on Reata. Arnold regretted his words at sight of the deep colour that came into her cheeks. She bit her lip, and then looking up at him, answered quickly, "Then of course you think that everything must be sacrificed to birth and fortune?"

"Not to fortune, but to birth."

"Everything invariably?" she asked, following him with her eyes as he moved away from the table.

"Everything invariably, as long as it does not involve a breach of honour."

"Strange how ready men are to give up everything for their special idol!" said Reata aloud, in bitter reflection; then to herself she added still more bitterly, "Do they ever sacrifice everything to love, I wonder?"

"Women, too, I suppose," he replied, smiling a little in spite of himself. "You don't suppose that they do not care about birth and fortune just as much as we do; except, perhaps, when they have got both, and then they can afford to appear indifferent."

"Oh no, no, you are wrong!" she began vehemently, and then checked herself.

"What then do they care for?" he asked from the window embrasure, leaning back with his hands in his pockets and looking amused.

What was she to answer? She hung her head a little; she could not well speak the thought in her mind. "Oh, for other things," she answered, evasively; and he stroked his moustache and smiled again slightly.

"Why are you disputing?" asked Gabrielle, who began to find the conversation rather tiresome. "Is it still about uncle Max's will?"

Nobody answered; indeed, Gabrielle's queries often remained unanswered.

"Uncle Max's will is so funny, isn't it? I tried to read it, but I could not understand it a bit. I wonder if aunt Olivia's will is also like that? Do you think it is?" The question addressed to nobody in particular.

"It is quite impossible for me to say what aunt Olivia's will may be like," replied Arnold, "especially as we are as yet perfectly ignorant of whether she has made a will at all;" and he looked towards Reata as if half expecting her to speak. Hitherto she had volunteered no information on the point, but it was not unreasonable to suppose that she knew something of it, especially as, in all likelihood, she would have had an actual interest in it. But if she knew anything she was not inclined to speak of it. Her head remained bent over her embroidery, and her eyes fastened on the pattern she was following.

"It is certainly strange," exclaimed Arnold, after pausing for a second and trying another shot — "very strange that we should not have heard from Miss Bodenbach's lawyers yet! That Monsieur Le-Vendeur ought to have written before this."

"What do you want him to write to you about? Do you want to be told that your aunt is dead again? Isn't one telling enough?" Although she did not raise her head,

Arnold, who was watching her face curiously, could see that she was dissatisfied, perhaps even disturbed.

"Monsieur Le-Vendeur certainly ought to have written," Arnold repeated.

"Ought he?" she put in, with an attempt at carelessness.

"Most decidedly; it is a positive want of respect towards us, who represent the elder branch of the family, not to have sent us a formal announcement of the event." And Arnold, as he expressed this opinion in his most uncompromising tone of voice, put his shoulders further back, and his head further up, looking very much like the high-nosed aristocrat which Reata had declared him to be from his photograph.

Down went Reata's work again, up went her head. "Then why don't you assert the rights of the elder branch of the family of Bodenbach,—you who apparently consider yourself its head?"

"That is exactly what I have done," replied Arnold, ignoring the latter part of her speech and touching his coat-pocket, from whence a narrow line of black-edged paper could be seen peeping out.

"You have written?" she said hurriedly, and with the disturbance and dissatisfaction of a minute ago now very legible on her face.

"I have written to Monsieur Le-Vendeur, and I am going down to the village to post it this afternoon. It was for that I came in here, to ask whether you had any letters ready, as they could go by the same opportunity?"

"Thank you; I shall have them ready by dinner-time."

While they were at dinner, a telegram was brought into the room. Reata could not forbear a shudder. She would never be able to see a telegram now, she thought, without shuddering.

"The horse will be here this afternoon," said Arnold. "The fellow is superstitious, it seems, and had forgotten that to-morrow is Friday. Very absurd!" he added, contemptuously, "but perhaps all the better; I have no objection to having to wait a day less."

"You will let us come to the stables and see it, won't you, Arnold?" asked Gabrielle.

"At what o'clock will he be here?" inquired the Baron.

"At three; and oh, by the by, that reminds me I had meant to go down to the village to post my letter; it will have to be in the post by three. The fellow's superstition has come in inconveniently after all. I don't very well know what to do, for I must be here when the horse comes, and I do not much like trusting the letter to the boy."

"I tell you what," cried Reata, in whose mind a resolution had suddenly shot up; "cannot Gabrielle and I walk down to the village and post the letters? It is such lovely weather, and we are going to take a walk at any rate."

"Oh yes, do let us go!" cried Gabrielle, clapping her hands. "It will be delightful, and I shall be able to get some blue worsted for knitting Chéri's cover."

"It is rather far for Gabrielle," said Arnold, doubtfully.

"Oh no, don't be cross, Arnold. I am quite well to-day, and we will walk slowly."

"I really think you had better let them go, Arnold," said the old Baron. "I wouldn't know what to do with the horse when it came: I never can remember your directions about rubbing them down, and bandaging up the legs, or how soon it is to be allowed to drink. You had far better remain here yourself. I wouldn't like to be left alone with it," he added, helplessly.

"Very well," said Arnold, with the reluctance which he always felt to altering any preconceived plan.

"Then let us go and dress at once," said Reata, springing up with great readiness. "We had better start immediately, so as not to be obliged to hurry."

"Now, your letter, please," said Reata, coming down a few minutes later, still breathless with the haste with which she had dressed.

Arnold drew the black-edged envelope out of his pocket and handed it to his sister, not seeing, or not wanting to see, Reata's half-stretched-out hand.

Ficha was barking impatiently on the steps outside, and Chéri's plaintive remonstrances at the delay could be heard through the open window.

A quick flush passed over Reata's face as Arnold handed the letter to Gabrielle past her. "Come, let us get off," she cried, moving towards the door.

"Do not let Gabrielle walk too fast," said the Baron, coming after her.

"No, I will take care of her," said Reata, turning her head back. What was there in her eyes that inspired Arnold with a sudden but vague distrust? Nothing he could put into words, or would deign to credit—merely a passing thought.

He called after the two girls as they reached the front door. "Remember, Gabrielle, to bring me a receipt for the letter; it is to be registered. Do you understand?" And then they were gone.

The way to the village led down hill, through a long winding lane, with high banks on either side, and hawthorn hedges, untidy and picturesque, not in flower yet, showing only their fresh, deep-cut, tender leaves, and just a few of those which stood up high on the bank holding up tiny clusters of minute round

buds, white or pink tinted, or perhaps as yet still faintly greenish; and every now and then a great straggling bramble-bush, which had roughly forced itself in between them, stretched its sprawling, naked, black arms unceremoniously across the yielding hawthorn boughs. At another time Reata would have liked to stop and fill her hands with the cowslips that grew tall and golden under the hedges with their drooping heads clear of the thick, closely-grown grasses, where all the tangle of little modest flowers—sorrel and eyebright and daisies—clustered richly, not able to do more than peep out from their hiding-places; all turning their laughing faces towards the sun, all courting its rays, and greedily drinking in the warmth, as yet still softly caressing, but soon to turn to the parching summer heat which will make them droop and bleach under its heavy breath. To-day Reata walked on steadily, and it is to be feared that she did not quite remember her promise of not hurrying Gabrielle; but the air was so soft and fresh and enlivening, the day was so bright with a thousand beauties, that Gabrielle herself never thought of resting by the way. Fícha and Chéri, happy in the sunshine and in each other's society, and spurred on to a spirit of adventure by the sight of the countless little openings in the side of the red-brown earth of the banks—openings which instinct and experience alike has taught them are the habitations of their natural enemies and rightful victims, the field-mice—scamper in a foolish headlong fashion up and down the steep sloping sides, snuffing at every hole with bloodthirsty eagerness, in a manner sufficient to make all the little inhabitants within withdraw in quaking terror to their inmost fastnesses. They linger long and

lovingly round the mouse-holes, but in vain; not even the sight of a single little pink snout or of the tip of a little wiry tail rewards their untiring and ferocious energy; the field-mice are too wise for that. The mistresses are far ahead. Reata's voice comes ringing up through the lane, "Fícha, Fícha, Fícha!" The two start, listen, abandon the hopes of mice, come springing off the bank, bringing down the loose earth-clods with them; and then putting out their full speed they race along, shooting past their mistresses with a headlong rush, unable to draw up at once in their mad pace.

"How strange your brother Arnold is sometimes!" Reata said suddenly to Gabrielle.

"He is dreadfully severe sometimes; I suppose that is what you mean."

"Well, no; he could hardly be severe with me," said Reata, as she made a snatch at a large white anemone in passing. "I daresay he would be if he could, but luckily he has no right. I don't mean that, but it is his being so unequal in his manner: sometimes he is almost pleasant to talk to, and then suddenly, nobody knows why, he takes offence at some absurd trifle, and gets his head up among the clouds, and after that you might as well try to talk to an iceberg."

"Don't you like Arnold?" inquired Gabrielle.

"Yes—I think I like him—rather; that is to say, I certainly do not dislike him. There is something noble about him in spite of his exaggerated ideas: I always said there was, from the first time I saw his photograph; and I don't think," she added, speaking half to herself, as she kicked on a little round grey pebble down the hill—"I don't think it is merely the eyebrows and the moustache."

"But Otto is much nicer, isn't he?" said Gabrielle, who never lost an opportunity of proclaiming her preference for her younger brother. "Everybody likes him better,—that is, everybody except Hermine. I can never get her to agree with me about that."

"Ficha, you heartless puppy, how can you bark at a new-born lamb?" cried Reata, running forward; "how would you like to be barked at if you were only an hour old?"

They had come to the end of the lane, and were crossing the wide meadow, beyond which lay the village—a meadow in its first green juiciness, smiling and smooth as a meadow should be, and dotted over with sheep. Here in the foreground, close to the path, a *very* young lamb was standing near its anxious mother, with Ficha and Chéri exercising all the power of their lungs at the family group, probably trying to make up for the disappointment about the field-mice. The old sheep tossed her head indignantly; the new-born infant looked amused, and made weak, awkward rushes at its persecutors, too young to know fear,—too young altogether, poor, ugly, awkward little thing—ugly with the ugliness of first youth, staggering about on its unsteady legs, stumbling over its own feet. Whatever poets may say as to the invariable charm of youth, youth and beauty do not always go hand in hand. What can be uglier than very young lambs, or birds, or frogs, or babies? Only this is not quite correct, at least so far as the frogs are concerned, for they never can become handsome under any circumstances.

"We are in plenty time," said Reata, as they walked up the village street. "There are still twenty minutes to three, and we need not hurry."

A village like most of the Sty-

rian villages;—clean, whitewashed houses, with square, deep-set windows; a little church, whitewashed like the houses, but with its slender spire gleaming in the sunshine far above their roofs, standing back from the street, amid its grass-grown burying-ground. Then further on came the inn, designated outside as "*Gasthaus zum wilden Mann*," bearing a large and hideous representation of an individual of the colour of a Red Indian and the physiognomy of a gorilla, in no particular costume to speak of, making a lively and incredible use of his limbs, and flourishing a young fir-tree torn out by the roots over his head—this painted on the white-wash of the wall. Alongside, half-a-dozen large horse-chestnut trees, with their buds just beginning to get yellow and gummy, and a row of coarse primitive wooden tables and benches driven into the ground as fixtures; here and there a glass of beer standing on the table, and a carter taking his afternoon draught. But this is not the hour for lounging; the inn is empty and quiet, the whole village street is very quiet, the people are out busy in the fields, but by-and-by, when they have done their work, the street and the benches under the horse-chestnuts will be crowded and noisy enough. The servant-girl, with her white apron, is leaning with crossed arms in the doorway of the inn. She calls out, "*Küss' die Hund Baronesse*," as the two girls pass. The village pump, right in the middle of the street, is spouting its crystal water merrily into the great wooden trough below, making a pleasant murmur in the still air. They pass the village school, through whose open windows droning nasal sounds are pouring forth in monotonous sameness. The *Pfarrer*, with a large book under his arm, is just opening the door of the

schoolhouse. He takes off his hat courteously to the ladies and passes in. They are very near the end of the street now, where the post-office stands, the last house in the row—post-office and tobacco-shop in one, decorated and designated by the double-headed black Austrian eagle upon flaming yellow ground. Gabrielle was walking slow and laggingly. Reata, too, had stopped hurrying: she did not look about her, she did not speak, hardly answering Gabrielle's remarks. During all the walk she had talked gaily enough—had seemed, in fact, to be in unnaturally high spirits. Now that they were in the village, and drawing near to that last house in the row, with the Austrian eagle outside, she grew silent and abstracted.

"You are tired," she said to Gabrielle, stopping short when they were within six paces of the post-office—not looking at Gabrielle at all, but at a thrush in a coarse wicker-cage hanging in the window of the house opposite.

"Yes, I am tired," said Gabrielle, rather dismally.

"Sit down on the bench here," said Reata, with an imperative motion, "and give me the letter; I will post it for you."

There was a wooden bench outside the post-office. Most of the houses had benches beside their doors. The village street lay in the whole length of its perspective before them; the gleaming church-spire, the little group of horse-chestnuts, the servant-girl with her white apron looking after the two ladies, the carters lounging out from their beer back to their carts, the sun catching the light on the spouting water from the village pump, but its murmur not reaching them here.

Gabrielle sat down on the wooden bench with unhesitating obedience.

She usually did what she was told, and had got into the habit of always doing what Reata told her to do. She drew a long breath, and then she put her hand in her pocket and pulled out Arnold's envelope. "Here is the letter: Arnold said it was to be registered, you know."

"Yes, I know," said Reata, taking the black-edged envelope from Gabrielle's hand, and as she took it the colour flashed suddenly into her face. "We have been walking too fast, Gabrielle, and it is my fault,—it is so wrong of me to have hurried you," and she bent down and gave Gabrielle a quick kiss on the forehead.

The door of the post-office was open, a bricklaid passage within, and at the end an inner door with a second and smaller edition of the double-headed eagle. Reata stepped in by the first door, then turned and stopped, almost hesitating. She looked at Gabrielle, she looked down at the black-edged envelope in her hand. "Don't let the dogs follow me, they would be a bore," she said, and then without looking again at Gabrielle, she turned quickly and walked in.

Gabrielle sat listlessly leaning back against the wall; the thrush in the wicker-cage opposite stuck its head through the bars and looked at her inquisitively; the school-door opened and poured out a straggling mass of boys and girls; the sound of a Styrian *Ländler*, sung high and shrill, came from the window of the neighbouring house. Gabrielle thought wearily of the long way home up-hill through the lane. She wished she was back home; she would not be in a hurry to go to the village again, she thought. Fícha and Chéri have been trying to get some fun out of the school children by barking indiscriminately at them,

and have succeeded so far as to frighten a small boy to the extent of making him fall down on the top of his slate, and set up a howl. Gabrielle makes a feeble effort to recall the dogs, but is not attended to; she hears the inner door open and shut again, and Reata comes out. Her cheeks are red and burning, and she holds up her hands as if to cool them, as she sits down on the bench.

"How hot you look!" exclaims Gabrielle. It struck her that there was something very unusual in the other's face.

"Oh, it was horribly stuffy in that little room there; I could hardly breathe."

By the time they had got back to the avenue, Gabrielle was leaning on Reata's arm very much exhausted by her expedition. Arnold met them half-way down the avenue. "Here you are at last. What a time you have been! Did you post my letter all safe, Gabrielle? Where is the receipt?"

"Reata has got it; it is all right."

Arnold turned to Reata and held out his hand. She was already fumbling cautiously in her pocket, and after a few seconds' delay brought out the desired receipt.

"*Le-Vendeur, Mexico*," &c., read Arnold, and then folded away the little slip of paper in his pocket-book. Reata had turned away her face, so that he could not see it. "Now you must come and see my horse; it came half an hour ago."

"Oh, Arnold, I am far too tired, I cannot walk any more; the road to the village seems to have got so much longer than it used to be."

"Why, how knocked up you look!" said Arnold, inspecting his sister for the first time, and then looking half reproachfully at Reata. "You have been walking too fast;

go into the house and lie down at once, and I will show you the horse to-morrow."

The colour in Reata's face deepened, but she made no answer.

"But Reata will go with you to see the horse: she is so fond of horses, and she was just saying that she was anxious to see it; didn't you, Reata?"

Arnold was only too glad to find anybody willing to take interest in his new acquisition, and as Gabrielle went into the house they two walked off towards the stables. The nearest way to the stables lay through the garden, and towards the garden they were moving—Reata, under the influence of some preoccupation, not noticing their direction.

"I suppose you know something about horses, being a Mexican," Arnold was saying.

"Oh yes, very——" she answered vaguely; and then started, for they had reached the garden gate, and Arnold was holding it open for her. She had never gone through the garden since that morning of day-dreams; she could never go through it again she had told herself thousands of times,—the surroundings would be too painful to her. She would find it infinitely preferable to walk over red-hot coals than to tread those gravel-walks again; and now here she was at the very gate, on the very brink of this place of torture, with a tall man holding open the gate for her to pass in—a man who looked as if he would not understand any sentimental objections, and who was already beginning to show surprise at her hesitation.

"Oh, but I did not mean to go in here," she began lamely, and then she caught the astonished look in his eyes and stopped. "Heavens! how big and uncompromising he looks, and *how* bushy

his eyebrows are!" and just to-day she felt less able to resist, perhaps because of something which weighed on her conscience: she yielded to fate, and went in, looking rather crestfallen. She did not walk with her usual elastic step—rather she slunk up the middle walk, thinking that she felt like a lamb being led to the slaughter, and carefully avoiding to look at the lilac-bushes, and the stone bench, and the crocus-bed; she would at least spare herself that pain. But it seemed out of a spirit of contradiction that fate and Arnold were not inclined to spare her any pain. Just at the crocus-bed Arnold stopped, and pointed out to her that the flowers were nearly over, and that he ought to see about getting some others put in their place. "Last year we had double daisies, but they didn't make enough show. I think marigolds or stocks would be better."

"Oh yes, I daresay," she answered, hurriedly; "but I don't know anything about your European flowers,—it is no use asking me."

Reata heaved a sigh of relief when the gate at the other end of the garden fell shut behind them, and said to herself that she had gone through a great deal that day.

"Well, how do you like him?" asked Arnold, after watching her as she walked into the stall, and patted the neck of the greedily-munching animal, who hardly raised his nose to be inspected.

"Yes, I like him; I am always fond of horses."

"It is the best horse I have had since I left the army, and I picked him up wonderfully cheap: it will be refreshing to have a real horse to ride again, instead of a broken-down screw."

"Then why didn't you get a real horse long ago?" she asked,

inadvertently, standing with her hand upon the bay's mane.

"Because I could not afford it," said Arnold, shortly.

"Oh, I beg your pardon, I forgot," and she looked away in some embarrassment.

There was a minute's silence: Arnold walked up to the horse's head, and began putting the covering over its back again. Reata stepped out of the stall, and sat down on an empty packing-case that stood upside down on the straw.

"Is the horse up to your weight?" she asked next.

"Up to my weight? I should think so," he replied, looking amusedly at her over the horse's back. "What makes you ask that? Look"—laying the palm of his hand on the bay's substantial shoulders—"that would carry a man even half a stone heavier than I am. It is a lovely back, I assure you; don't you think so?"

"I don't understand anything about that; and I don't see what is lovely about the back—it seems to me that all horses' backs are alike."

Arnold broke into a laugh: his fancy was tickled by the expression of this very feminine opinion.

"I only asked," said Reata, not much discomfited by his laughter, "because you look so big, and I thought you required a bigger horse."

"But I am not so heavy as I look; it is my beard that makes me look so, and a beard weighs nothing. Besides, the horse isn't a small one; fifteen three is as much as I should ever require."

"But fifteen three is just Maraquita's height, isn't it?"

"Yes, I believe so; but what of that?"

"Oh, I thought Maraquita was too light for your weight."

"What on earth made you think

so? and how on earth did you ever come to think of my weight in connection with Maraquita?"

Reata looked down, and stirred the straw with her feet; she could not tell him from whom her information had come.

"I am afraid you don't like my horse," said Arnold, as she made no answer; "you seem inclined to make so many objections to it."

"Nonsense! you are quite mistaken; only I know nothing about horses' legs and backs, and all that sort of thing. I can only see when it is pretty, and you cannot deny that it is not so pretty as Maraquita."

"Maraquita!" repeated Arnold, in a tone of surprise; "oh, she belongs to quite a different category! My bay is a good enough horse in its way, but not a quarter of Maraquita's value; the sort of horse I never could aspire to at present, nor Otto either, if it had not been for the lucky chance that came in his way."

"Then you would have cared to have Maraquita after all, and you say you would not have been too heavy for her?" asked Reata, hurriedly.

"Cared!" The tone of Arnold's voice expressed volumes.

"You were to have had her, it was quite settled," she said, watching to see what effect her words would have upon him. "Did your brother never tell you so?" The words came out before she knew; she had intended never to speak of Otto of her own free will.

Arnold took his hand from off the bay's shoulders and transferred it to his pocket; he looked at her in surprise. "Told me what?" he said, almost sternly; and again she felt the weight of that something on her conscience, and that other something in her pocket, and was obliged to reply.

"Oh, your aunt wanted to send you Maraquita, to make up for your not having come out to Mexico; but your brother thought that you would not care, or could not use her—or something." She spoke hesitatingly, colouring, looking down at the straw at her feet, and then, as he gave no answer—"he is angry," she said to herself, "and will hate his aunt because she has not given him a horse." "Please, don't be angry," she said, half timidly; "your aunt was very anxious to send you something, but she could not think of anything else at the last moment." And then she raised her eyes from the straw to his face.

"Angry with an old lady whom I never saw, and who is dead now! I should think not; but how could Otto——? He might have known that I would have given him the horse if——" and then he checked himself suddenly and drew himself up. Of anger properly there was none in his face, but a height of supreme contempt in his eyes, about every feature, and his sunburnt colour had deepened by a shade.

Reata took in these signs at a glance, and looked away again. How could it be otherwise? Was not the recollection of that day when they sat on the water-trough in the grass paddock rising in her mind? All Otto's plausible, well-varnished, softly turned excuses and reasons, were they not ringing in her ears, and making her blush for him? No longer soft and plausible, but in all their bareness of paltry selfishness. "And how dreadful it must be to be looked at in that contemptuous manner!" she thought, glancing at Arnold's upright figure. "Would he look at me with that withering scorn, if he knew what I had done?" And Reata, as she bent down lower to

hide her face, felt almost that if she had seen that look before, she would not have done what she had done that day.

"I wish I had not told you," she said, desperately.

"It is of no consequence whatever," was the answer given somewhat coldly, and Arnold turned away and appeared to be narrowly examining the quality of the oats in the manger. "Perhaps Otto is right after all; it certainly is of much greater consequence to him to have a handsome horse than it can be to me, and no doubt Maraquita would have been rather out of place here." His tone had an assumption of carelessness in it, as if determined to treat the whole matter *en bagatelle*; but human nature is but human nature after all, and Arnold could not forbear throwing a somewhat disparaging glance at the general shape of the quietly feeding animal, mentally comparing him to the beautiful Maraquita.

"Then he is noble after all," thought Reata; "he wants to shield his brother." But to his last remark she made no reply.

As she was passing the open door of the sitting-room, Gabrielle called out to her, "Do come in, Reata, and tell me all about the horse."

"I shall come in five minutes," she called back, and then flew up the staircase to her room. She closed the door, bolted it, locked it, then rushed to the window, and pulling down the blind with a jerk, darkened the room. She was doing everything in feverish haste. She struck a light, but her hand shook so with her haste that she could hardly hold the match to the candle. Then quickly she pulled out of her pocket a paper, a large black-edged envelope, and without looking at it, she held it out to the candle till the little flickering flame seized upon it, and, burning high and smokily, consumed it with a ready tongue. She held it with her head averted, as if she dared not look the yellow-blue light in the face. She held it till the burning heat stung her fingers, and then she flung the last curling remnant down on the floor, and watched it as it smouldered and shrivelled away into nothing before her eyes.

AN AMERICAN PRINCESS.

THE attention of the world has lately been recalled in a very forcible and melancholy way to the great family romance which has more or less attracted its interest for nearly a hundred years—the romance which began with the young Corsican artillery officer who had so large a band of kindred to push on and help in the world, when affairs were at their worst in France. A hundred years ago Napoleon Bonaparte was a harmless, undistinguished boy; and the old world, with all its picturesque injustices, its seigniorial rights, and popular visions, pursued its way, undisturbed by visions of retribution. Since then there have been two Empires full of splendour and commotion—there have been all the tragic alternations of triumph and downfall which a great drama demands. What was gained at a stroke has more than once, to all appearance, been lost by a blow almost as unexpected; and twice over, the race which has had so wonderful yet so brief a career, has seemed to die out in the person of a young and blameless heir, trained in paths of duty and honour by which certainly their fathers did not come to empire. The young Prince over whose untimely grave all England shed tears, not only of tender sympathy but of acute remorseful pain, as half guilty of the loss she deplored, appears to the common eye once more to have made an end of the family and its hopes. All was over for the Bonapartes, people said, in the first shock of that pain; and though we are far from agreeing in such an opinion, it is at least clear that this strange family has reached, again, one of the periodical crises in its career, out of which it

appears all but impossible that it should ever rise. When we think that it is not yet a century since it was founded, the history of the race seems scarcely credible; for though its years of exile and downfall have far exceeded those of its glory, it is no longer a family of upstarts, but one fully recognised by the proudest European royalties as an actual dynasty, and a member of their mysterious sect—a result which is more extraordinary than either Empire. Though the French nobles have held themselves aloof, and refused the countenance of the Faubourg to *ces gens-là*, kings have not been so exclusive. The young Prince Imperial, though with no kingdom, and in all eyes save those of his own party the most doubtful hopes, has been buried with as much state as if he had been the legal heir of a unanimous country. Ambassadors from all the crowned heads in Europe followed his coffin; his pall was borne by princes; all the members of that caste which is the least easy to move, and the most impossible to convince, expressed grief, and put on mourning for the death of this hapless lad, in whose veins ran none of their royal blood, not even on his mother's side. The heir of the Bonapartes apparently wanted nothing more, tremendous as were the exertions of the first great Bonaparte to secure something more, at the least a princess-mother, for his successors. The boy's grandmother was no more than a French lady of the *petite noblesse*—the daughter of the woman whom the first Napoleon discarded for his archduchess—his mother a Spaniard of good but not royal lineage. He was all Bonaparte, and nothing

more. Nevertheless he was recognised as one of their own class by all the European monarchs. A more remarkable verdict has seldom been procured from a class so little open to logic, and so unimpressible. The Cromwells passed away without an effort even to elude oblivion, and such a poor little shooting-star as a Rienzi had scarcely time to glimmer ere it was gone; but the Bonapartes have made themselves into a dynasty. Even those who believe the race to be finally ended will scarcely deny this remarkable fact. Sir Walter Scott, they say, thought less of all his noble works than of founding a Scotch lairdship for his descendants after him, in which he failed. But his great contemporary succeeded in his similar ambition. His conquests are lost, but his family has remained. Perhaps that imperious shade, if he could now inform us of his sentiments, might lament, like Macbeth, the irony of these stern Fates who

"Keep the word of promise to the ear,
And break it to the hope,"—

while looking on, a solemn bystander, to see the recognition of his heir in the fullest and most sympathetic sense, when that heir was done with all human hopes and honours; but still there can be little doubt that Napoleon's acute and penetrating eye would see with satisfaction that this recognition has been made.

It may be said, no doubt, that the manner in which that hapless but heroic boy met his death had much to do with the honours paid him; and it may even be supposed that a certain sigh of satisfaction in having done with a family which has been the cause of so much disturbance gave consolation to the sympathetic grief of the thrones and dominations and powers who

presented themselves by their representatives at the funeral of the Prince Imperial. This, however, is a secondary matter so far as the race is concerned, which in its own consciousness is by no means done with. When the Empress has been added in her turn (and few with better reason) to the roll of those women in history, those queens of sorrow and misfortune as much as of beauty and fame, whose presence throws over the gravest chapters of national life a certain enhancement of poetry—and when her son is as far from us as his predecessor, the more hapless, less distinguished Napoleon, who perished of obscurity, as this happier boy did of over-hardihood,—the effect will still remain, to the benefit probably of those for whom neither Empress nor Prince had much love. The romance of the family has apparently ended with this last pure Bonaparte, the descendant of Hortense Beauharnais and Eugénie de Montijo, whom all the world has recognised as Imperial, though he had not a drop of royal blood in his veins: but the family has not ended with the romance. And it is only now, when the representative of the Napoleons, the legal inheritor of the purple which the first Bonaparte fashioned and dyed for himself, is also—unbeloved and unhonoured as he may be—a prince in the more ordinary sense of the word, an actual member of the royal caste both by descent and alliance, that we can fully realise what the astute founder of the family proposed and foresaw. Napoleon has indeed had a greater triumph than he intended. Up to this time the foundation of his house has been himself alone; and his arbitrary interference with the marriages of his brothers, and the cruel abandonment of his own true wife, have proved as unnecessary as they were odious. There never

was a stranger or more striking example of what, for want of a better name, we call poetical justice, and at the same time of the tremendous irony of events, than that which made the descendants of the injured Josephine the heirs of Napoleon's empire, setting aside his own barbarous contrivance to force from fate a royal family of his own with that contempt of human plans which is so conspicuous in history. It is only now, however, when this chapter is ended, that we can begin to judge what advantages the race is likely to reap from the royal alliances upon which he insisted; and it is curiously appropriate that the moment when the attention of those who are specially interested in the fortunes of France has been turned upon the son of Jerome Bonaparte, should be the very moment when, by the death of Jerome's American wife, a private chapter* of the family history should be unfolded to the world.

We are compelled to add, however, that though the story of Elizabeth Patterson irresistibly directs our thoughts to the race with which she allied herself, and attracts our imagination at the outset by the very unusual spectacle of a dynasty in the very throes of birth, yet it is less the Bonapartes than Elizabeth Patterson who fixes our amused curiosity as we go on. There is something whimsically suitable, no doubt, in the contact of the American with this mushroom royalty, embodying in its own brief story, in the very shortest term of years, all the ups and downs of a royal race—scarcely developed into full grandeur as a reigning family before it falls into a half-comic imitation of an exiled Court with all its conspiracies and

excitements, in itself a somewhat tawdry spectacle. The creation and downfall of a royal family, which in the duller Old World was a matter of centuries, would not strike with any surprise the daughter of the New, though its history was all epitomised into some twenty years or so. And indeed, when we look back, it is quite astonishing how excellent an imitation,—an imitation, too, with several original features of its own—for neither the Stuarts nor the Bourbons ever had such an addition to their dignity as was procured by the grim old eagle caged and sickening at St Helena,—of a real old royal race in exile could be got up at the shortest notice by those clever Corsicans in the old Borghese palace, where Princess Pauline flattered and disappointed all her retainers, and Madame Mère kept the family together. The comic elements in it—which were at the same time tragi-comic—never struck the commonplace but high-spirited, self-willed, and ambitious woman, who, with her son's interest in her mind and an enormous sense of flattered self-importance in her heart, and proud consciousness of belonging to "the family," obeyed the call to Rome with as much awe and elation as if it had been to the presence of a Most Sacred Majesty.

But we must not thus jump into the very centre of Madame Bonaparte's history, which is worth beginning at the beginning. Her long, and in her own opinion often triumphant, struggle with life and its difficulties, lasted through the whole of this varied and eventful century, and she died but the other day, having seen the fullest retribution, had she desired it, worked out upon her enemy. But

* The Life and Letters of Madame Bonaparte. By Eugene Didier. Sampson Low & Co.

Elizabeth Patterson did not desire it; nor was the downfall of the race which had injured yet elevated her, at all a satisfaction to her mind. She was wronged, no doubt, but she preferred her wrong to a more mediocre and less splendid right, and was better content to be the repudiated wife of a Bonaparte prince, little real as his principedom might be, to more legitimate and homely happiness. The story of her long life—of the conflict with “the family,” which she kept up with unfailing spirit but no bitterness—and of her anxious and determined pursuit of pleasure, society, and distinction, with cheapness—is told not very skilfully in this little volume; but the gleams of self-revelation that break out through her letters make it more interesting than many a better production. We have rarely met with a more distinct or more characteristic personage; but if any one expects to find in the American beauty an injured and pensive heroine, wounded in her best affections, and maintaining a noble struggle for the vindication of her honour and her child’s legitimacy, it will be well that he dismiss this idea at once from his mind. Madame Bonaparte had no doubt various stings in her life, like the most of us—chief of which was her son’s determined resistance of all projects to marry him, as his mother thought, suitably, and to establish him with the importance befitting what she considered his rank and position in Europe; but her connection with the Bonapartes was not the misfortune but the glory of her existence. And while we read, we confess that our previously warm sense of Napoleon’s arbitrary and lawless tyranny in severing Jerome and his young wife blows off altogether in the contemplation of a state of affairs entirely unheroic, in which there are neither

hearts to break nor honour to be wounded. The perfectly wide-awake young Yankee, counting exactly the cost of her ambition, and accepting its penalties with a philosophy which would be fine were not its objects of the most vulgar and petty description; and the prosaic and shabby adventurer, who parts company with her on exactly the same principles, call for none of our sympathies. The mixture of mean and vulgar unreality in all the bigness and glitter of the empire is always present, turning even enthusiasm into cynicism; but in this case indignant virtue has no standing-ground, for the victims are much more “shoddy” than the tyrant.

At the same time, we do not know where a revelation more strange, more pitiable, more laughable, has been given to the world. We are sometimes doubtful, indeed, whether we are reading a real woman’s very genuine letters, bearing post-marks, or the inscriptions necessary to communications conveyed as she preferred, to save postage and risk, “by private hand;” or whether it is Thackeray’s old Baroness Beatrix, or more recent still, an Irene Macgillcuddy in years, who is the author of these remarkable productions. There is a great deal of both these heroines in this great Elizabeth, but with the difference, in respect to the first at least, that the American lady is strictly correct in all her words and ways, and never has any touch of adventure or even flirtation to record. We do not gather that she had any dislike to admiration, or even adulation; but naturally she would not recount her experiences in this kind to the staid and somewhat severe old gentleman over the water, who signs himself “Yours sincerely,” and whom she addresses as “Dear Sir.” There was no sentiment lost between the two; but

though he disapproved of her, there is an evident resemblance between the father and daughter. The prudence of the long-headed commercial politician who buys up fire-arms and ammunition as soon as he perceives the signs of coming war, and sells the means of resistance to his adopted country at a good profit, is admirably reflected in the calculations of the daughter, who frankly owns the marriage in which most women would have felt their hopes and happiness to be sacrificed, to be the best that she could have desired. "It would have been perhaps a blessing," she says, in one remarkable letter, "if I could have vegetated as the wife of some respectable man in business; but you know that nature never intended me for obscurity, and that with my disposition and character I am best as I am." Had it so happened that the author of the "Recollections of Irene Macgillicuddy" had delayed the publication of that delightful revelation of Transatlantic habits and feelings till after the appearance of this bit of real history, no one would have doubted that he had drawn his inspiration, in part at least, from a type so remarkable. The resemblance, however, only proves the extreme truth of the later picture. This wonderful American woman is evidently one of the roots of the race from which Irene Macgillicuddysprang. But she is more *naïve*, more outspoken in perfect decorum and propriety, than even that flower of New York society, and utters herself with a kind of composed pomp of good sense and invulnerable correctness which is infinitely more telling than fiction, feeling herself to have reached not only a position afforded to few women of her nation, but a height of experience and knowledge of the world which make

her exposition of her sentiments a duty.

Elizabeth Patterson was born in 1785, and is said to have had from her childhood the promise of "extraordinary beauty, wit, and fascination of manners." At eighteen, when young Jerome Bonaparte, the brother of the First Consul of France, landed in Baltimore, she was the leading beauty of the place, and instantly attracted the new-comer. They were engaged within a few weeks, though Jerome was under age, and his marriage was consequently illegal in France, as being without the consent of his mother, his only surviving parent. Mr Patterson, a wary and sensible man of business, opposed the match strenuously, but was at length compelled to give in, the young lady declaring that she would "rather be the wife of Jerome Bonaparte for an hour, than the wife of any other man for life." Parental control was useless in face of such determination; but all the precautions that could be thought of were employed in the marriage-contract, in which, after all kinds of pledges and engagements of everlasting fidelity, the cautious American added a condition in case the marriage should be annulled after all. Thus it is clear that the consequences were foreseen from the beginning. It was the time of short waists and the wonderful gored skirts of our grandmothers; and "all the clothes worn by the bride might have been put in my pocket," a spectator says. "Her dress was of muslin, richly embroidered, of extremely fine texture. Beneath her dress she wore but a single garment." The young Baltimore belle, slim and straight in her scanty gown, with but one garment underneath, conscious of such a dazzling, triumphant lot as no American woman had ever chanced upon before, with visions

of courts and splendours unknown, and a whole continent at her feet, beamed upon the world at the side of the young Frenchman, and felt herself every inch a princess. Neither then nor at any subsequent time is the reader called upon to be sorry for her. If she did not get entirely what she wanted, she yet gained a position which she considered worth a great many sacrifices. Years after her divorce and downfall, she upbraids her father with his want of pride in her. "I am surprised," she cries, "that you do not see the advantages of my position compared with that of the daughters of the other people in Baltimore." The opposition of the French First Consul, his warning addressed to all the French and Dutch seaports not to permit her disembarkation—all added to her self-complacency. The young wife, however, after a gay year in America, during which she had the gratification of exhibiting herself and her young Altesse to her compatriots, in glory superior to any that American girl had ever won before, had a hard enough struggle to undergo in the second year of her married life. The young pair came to Europe in one of Mr Patterson's ships, but were met at Lisbon by Napoleon's interdict. Jerome Bonaparte landed, no doubt with a fluttering heart, to meet his dreaded elder brother, and arrange matters, if possible, for his wife's reception, while she was left behind in the ship. "An ambassador from Napoleon waited upon her, and asked what he could do for *Miss Patterson*; to whom she replied, 'Tell your master that *Madame Bonaparte* is ambitious, and demands her rights as a member of the royal family.'" From Lisbon the indomitable young woman went to Amsterdam, where she was ordered out of the Texel as soon as

she arrived, and not permitted even to approach the town or to hold any communication with its inhabitants. Thus rejected from all the Continental shores, she came at last to England, where the victim of Napoleon's cruelty was, of course, a heroine. "So great was the desire of the crowd to see this now celebrated woman, that Mr Pitt sent a military escort to keep off the multitude that had assembled to watch her disembark."

Her son was born six or seven weeks after her arrival; and the position of this solitary girl of twenty bearing her child in a foreign country, unsustained by the presence of either husband or kindred, is about as forlorn as can be conceived. But she does not seem to make any complaint; nor indeed, when the separation proved final and Jerome consented to a divorce, does it ever seem that her courage or self-confidence failed her. "She herself," says her biographer, "soon accepted the result as inevitable. She was too thorough a woman of the world to be deceived by the honeyed words which Jerome addressed to her after their separation at Lisbon. Rochefoucauld had made her cynical." Rochefoucauld has had a great many sins laid upon him; but of all his supposed offences, the least likely, we should think, is that of having steeled a young wife of the ordinary feminine mould to "accept as inevitable" the desertion of her husband, and make up her mind coolly to the total severance of a divorce. But Elizabeth Patterson had not been blinded by any of the delusions of love, and her romance was of a kind totally different from the ordinary romance of girlhood. "Her ambition had led her to contract what seemed to her the most splendid matrimonial alliance ever made by an American woman." And though it

had not been the dazzling success she hoped, there was still apparently enough in her exceptional position to keep up her courage and her spirits. A woman who had been the object of the great Napoleon's personal opposition, whom the Pope had refused to divorce, and (even) whose husband had married a princess of a reigning house, found enough in these modes of distinction to keep up the elation and self-consequence with which her first (apparently) splendid outset had filled her.

Nevertheless, she had no doubt a sufficiently bitter interval to pass when, after the birth of her child, she returned to America. The allusions in her after-letters to her native country as a place in which she had never been appreciated, and which she regarded with positive loathing, give some indication of the character of those silent years. The contemporaries over whom she had triumphed would have been angelic indeed had they not made her downfall apparent to her; but except the allusions to which we have referred, the biography is reticent, and gives no record of the state of mind or life of the fallen princess. However, at the earliest moment possible—as soon as Napoleon's final downfall had opened the Continent—we find her starting for those longed-for fields of conquest, those courts and societies of the Old World which every American woman of spirit seems to feel her fittest sphere. As early as August 1815 we find her in England, having first prudently procured on her own part an American divorce from the husband who had divorced her several years previously, but who, it was feared, might remember, after his brother's downfall, that his American wife had money, or the prospect of money. Thus freed, but still calling herself Madame Bonaparte, and clinging to the

"rank" which she believed herself to have derived from this connection, the lady invaded Europe with ideas not very clearly expressed, but to all appearances tending towards a new matrimonial alliance, and all that fairy-land of hope which Society seems to hold out to the inexperienced. To judge from the indignant self-defence of her letters, her departure must have been opposed by her friends, or at least by society in Baltimore, envious and angry at her probable advancement. The following letter addressed to her father shows at once the sorrows of the past and the hopes that now filled her bosom:—

"As to leaving America without the consent of my friends, it appears to me that if indeed I have friends there, they would have wished me to come to a country where I am cherished, visited, respected, and admired. It appears to me that if I have friends in America, their friendship might have been shown in some more agreeable mode than finding fault with me for being miserable in a country where I never was appreciated, and where I never can be contented. It appears to me natural, too, that if I have friends in America—which I have, I reluctantly confess, sometimes doubted—that their pride might be gratified in hearing that I am in the first society in Europe, and that, too, for my personal merits; for without vanity I may say so, since I have neither rank, fortune, nor friends of my own willing to assist or protect me. I acknowledge that the standing I possess in this country is highly flattering, and that it is not surprising I should prefer people of rank and distinction who are willing to notice me. . . . My misfortune and the declining state of my health have excited more interest here than in my own country, and have been a passport to the favour of the great. My talents and manners are likely to preserve their good opinion.

"Your own pride," she adds, "must be interested in having me the object of public esteem, and your interest is

to have me placed in an elevated situation. As to the opinions of old Mr Gilmor and other very respectable and worthy persons, that I ought to be in Baltimore, they only tell you so because they know that their daughters might come here and never be known. Besides, they are envious of your fortune and my situation. Look how they run after the poorest sprigs of nobility, and then you will know what they think of my standing in Europe. I am surprised you do not see the advantage of my position compared with that of the daughters of the other people in Baltimore, and that you permit the chattering of envious people to influence you. . . . If people do not approve my conduct in America, what is the reason they paid me so much attention? Ask George what I was in New York. What other American woman was ever attended to as I have been there? Who ever had better offers? I never would marry without rank, or God knows I might have got money enough by marriage. They are afraid of your supporting me in a rank, and of your sending my child where he will be in one, which all their Government stock, insurance stock, and real property could never put them. Let them come and try which is of the most consequence, they or me!"

From this burst of self-assertion, Madame Bonaparte descends to entreat her father at least to allow it to be supposed that she is to have a share of his wealth. "The reputation of your fortune would be a great advantage to me abroad, and I am sure you cannot object to my having the honour of it, provided you keep the substance," she says; and adds with admirable frankness,—"In Europe, a handsome woman who is likely to have a fortune will marry well; but if it gets about that her parents are dissatisfied with her, they will think she will get nothing by them; and if she had the beauty of Venus and the talents of Minerva, no one will marry her. People here," she adds, with the most solemn seriousness,

"are not such fools as to marry poor beauties, however much they may admire them." On the other hand, "The term *old*, which is so often repeated in America, is completely banished from the polite vocabulary. Women of forty, even fifty, are more cherished and as advantageously married as chits of sixteen." The beautiful Elizabeth was by this time thirty, in the fullest bloom of her charms; but, no doubt, had already begun to be pushed off the scene by these forward "chits" of American precocity. In the meantime, while thus whetting her blade and preparing all her arms for conquest, she gravely reassures her father's mind as to her own determined propriety of behaviour. "There is no danger," she says, "of my committing a single imprudent action—circumspect conduct can only procure the distinction for which I sighed during ten years." Upon this point she moralises in the most pompous commonplaces, yet with a consciousness of her own attractions which is irresistible, and all the serious elation of expectant triumph. "The situation of a young and beautiful woman has ever been one of peril," she says. "Detraction accompanies praise, and the advantages of loveliness are dearly purchased by the pains which envy inflicts. The favourites of nature are, indeed, seldom those of fortune. But since we possess not the power of organising ourselves, wisdom consists in pursuing the course our talents and ambition point out to us." Thus it was on no roving pursuit of pleasure, but with the most serious intentions, that the beautiful American set out on her adventures in the Old World. She came to England first, where she declares she had "a kind and flattering reception from the most fashionable and elevated ranks in

society," but made apparently no serious success. Then she went to France, where, her biographer says, "her success was greater than that ever before enjoyed there by any American woman. Her sufferings had made her a heroine, and her grace and beauty now made her a social queen." She was invited to the Court of Louis XVIII., but declined the invitation with inimitable mock dignity—being, as it were, a princess of the fallen Empire. But "the leading men of the time sought her acquaintance." Madame de Staël praised her beauty, Talleyrand her wit, and even the Duke of Wellington admired this American invader.

All these triumphs, however, seem to have stopped short of the end she sought; and notwithstanding her protestations of her preference for Europe, she returned to America next year. "There is but one single chance of securing tranquillity for the future years which I may have to live—that is, to remain in Europe," she writes to her father in February 1816. "I can never be satisfied in America. It has always been my misfortune to be unfitted for the modes of existence there; nor can I return to them without a sacrifice of all I value on earth. . . . I form no plans; I try to hope that some unexpected happiness may continue me where alone I attach value to existence." It is very clear, from the unbounded admiration and not ungenerous envy with which she contemplates and records at a later period her sister-in-law's union with the old Marquis Wellesley, what kind of happiness she was looking for: but apparently it did not come; or else stern old Mr Patterson in Baltimore was too strong for even the high spirit and imperious will of his daughter: anyhow, a month or two after this very

decided expression of her opinions we find her back in America, where once more there ensues a silent interval of three years. What she was doing or thinking, during that period, her biographer does not know or does not care to tell—perhaps nothing more than fretting against those "modes of existence" for which she felt herself unfitted. At all events, when she returns to Europe at the end of this silence her attitude is changed. Whether this is because of a change in her own mind, or the advances which were made to her by members of "the family," it is evident that our conquering beauty had put aside all undignified desires for that "unexpected happiness" which had once been the end of her hopes, and had now accepted the *rôle* which, if not so brilliant as a marriage with a penniless marquis of sixty-five, that highest hope (according to her enthusiastic description) of American loveliness and wealth, was at least captivating to the imagination—the *rôle* of a kind of widowed princess,—not so imposing, indeed, as the Princess Pauline Borghese in the matter of rank, yet on such a footing of equality with that sister beauty as superior virtue and the sentimental grace of misfortune might give. We must add, however, that she shows the greatest sense in all her arrangements as reported by herself, about her son, who accompanies her, and whose education she declares to be her first care. "My opinion is," she says, speaking of the overtures made to her by Pauline, "as his education is the only certain fortune which I calculate upon for him, that he should remain ignorant of the expectations which are held out to him, and on which I think there is no reliance to be placed, until he has acquired sufficient instruction to enable him to pursue some useful

and honourable occupation in life." But characteristically having made this wise resolution for her son, Madame Bonaparte resolves to accept the princess's invitation for herself, and make acquaintance with the family which has treated her so badly, yet by means of which she has gained so much distinction. She has never, she declares, "felt the least resentment toward any individual of that family, who certainly injured me, but not from motives which would offend me. I was sacrificed to political considerations, not to the gratification of bad feelings—and under the pressure of insupportable disappointment became not unjust."

It is not difficult to understand how, to the Baltimore merchant's daughter, the fact of being "sacrificed to political considerations" and Imperial necessities was a wonderful salve to her wounds; and her intercourse with her pseudo-royal connections is conducted with a diplomatic skill worthy of even loftier circles. Thus, when she writes to her august if not too respectable sister-in-law, Jerome Bonaparte's divorced wife signs herself Elizabeth Patterson with politic humility. Perhaps at an early period her pride would not have stooped to such an acceptance of her evil fate; but she is too deeply impressed by the dignity of belonging to the Imperial family to stand upon her pride in her first introduction to them. Henceforward her letters are full of these personages, and the hopes and fears to which their cordialities of promise, but lack of performance, give rise. It is not, however, until considerably more than a year after their first overtures reach her that she finally sets out, taking her son with her. "Bo" is by this time sixteen, and the constant subject of her letters—his education,

his interests, and the future which he must be trained to work out for himself, being continually on her lips. He himself, on his side, adds a little to our knowledge of the much more entertaining personage whom he accompanies. "Mamma," the little Jerome writes from Geneva, "goes out nearly every night to a party or a ball. She says she looks full ten years younger than she is, and if she had not so large a son she could pass for twenty-five years old. She has a dancing-master, and takes regularly three lessons a-week, and has done so for the last six months,—is every day astonished at the progress she makes, and is fully determined to dance next winter. She constantly regrets that she had not danced at Paris." The intense seriousness of frivolity which makes the lady "constantly regret" this failure in her previous campaign is delightful. Who knows what results might have followed had she danced at Paris? But in the meantime that chapter is over; and though she means to dance next winter, for the moment all her thoughts are bent upon Bo's advancement.

It is amusing to trace the difference in his mother's language in respect to Bo before this visit and after. It is not that she ceases the care of his education, which previously had appeared to her by far the most important element in his fate, but that her impression of her son's importance and higher position increases with every letter she writes. "The child has nothing to rely upon but his own merit. The child's only prospect of fortune is in his own capacity and exertions," she says, before the Roman experiences. "The only certain fortune parents can give their posterity is some lucrative and respectable profession, such as the law." But after the introduction to "his

family," and the counsels and friendship of Pauline and Madame Mère, Bo's mother begins to feel that "a profession would be rather unsuitable to Bo's circumstances. His position," she says, "is more difficult than that of any other young person, because it is more conspicuous—and people expect more sense and better conduct from him than are exacted from the middle classes." "He has rank in Europe which places him in the best and highest society;" though she adds, with serious superiority, "it is very possible he would have been more happy with less dignity of rank." Her letters are full of similar expressions, evidently written in perfect good faith, and the most genuine belief in the greatness of the race to which her child, and likewise she herself, had the surpassing honour to belong. In the meantime his aunt and grandmother in Rome invented the most admirable way of providing for Bo, without any expenditure on their own part. They decided that the thing to do was to marry him to his cousin Charlotte, the daughter of Joseph Bonaparte, then residing in America under the title of Comte de Survilliers, and the only moneyed person in the family. The manner in which this proposition was received was extremely characteristic. "Bo," writes his mother, "feels the propriety of doing what I please on the subject of the marriage, and has no foolish ideas of disposing of himself in the way young people do in America." "I hope it may take place," says Bo himself, with the seriousness, yet indifference, of seventeen; "for then I would return immediately to America to pass the rest of my life among my relatives and friends." In the meantime the boy made the best possible impression upon all his family in Rome, who were very

kind to him and his mother. "They have all been very kind," the latter writes. "The princess has presented me with an elegant ball-dress, a pink satin cloak, and a bonnet. She has new-dressed Bo even to his flannel jacket, and has promised to allow him two thousand francs, or four hundred dollars, annually, to dress himself till he marries, when the pension will cease, and she will give him a capital of forty thousand francs, or eight thousand dollars." What all these promises came to we have some difficulty in making out. Prince Jerome, the K. of W., as Madame Bonaparte calls him with a natural pride mingled with the least little suspicion of spitefulness, certainly makes the young man an allowance, which his mother speaks of receiving, though she adds that she never calculated upon it; and Pauline left him something in her will. But the grand project was the marriage, which was at once to assure the young man's fortune. On this point his mother has very strong opinions. "I shall esteem myself fortunate in being able to dispose of my son according to my views," she writes, "instead of his choosing before his judgment is matured, and probably encumbering himself for life with a poor wife and clamorous offspring. Marriage ought never to be entered into for any other purpose than comfort, and there is none without consequence and fortune." "There is no knowing how marriage will turn out," she says later, with a curious twist of the usual alarms on the subject. "Women may treat husbands ill, leave them, die before them; but if a good provision be made for the husband, there is nothing lost by risking a marriage." "I will never consent," she adds, on another occasion, "to his marrying any one but a person of great wealth. He knows I can only re-

cognise a marriage of ambition and interest, and that his name and rank require it." But at the same time, a cold chill of presentiment seems to have breathed through the soul of this admirable mother. She has a mortal terror of love, and all the vagaries caused by it. "I beg, my dear sir," she cries, addressing her father, "that you will advise Bo, and discourage all that tendency to romance and absurd falling in love which has been the ruin of your own family." Afterwards, when this project of marriage is over, and the boy is peacefully pursuing his studies at Harvard, his mother's apprehensions on this score again find vent. "Marriage," she says, "offers no such comforts as to induce rational beings to give up their independence without some return of advantage. I am at times not happy on the subject of his falling in love, recollecting the extreme folly and great simplicity of the people he sees, who, without giving a single thought to prudence or the future, marry some poor young woman from the caprice of the moment, and consign themselves to her insipid society, and the torment of bringing up a family of children. I hope you, my dear sir, will inculcate to him the folly and absurdity of such marriages, which are unknown beyond the New World."

As it turned out eventually, these anxious forebodings were fully justified. Jerome Bonaparte was not like his mother. He seems to have been a serious, well-disposed American, desirous of living a peaceable life among the people whose government and laws and customs he declares he prefers to all others; and though he consented with sober-minded docility to the first marriage projected for him, and did his best to please his relations and make himself agreeable to them, his heart was never

with these foreign folk. "I am excessively tired of the way of living at my father's," he wrote to his grandfather in America, while living with the "K. of W." in full enjoyment of his position as a Bonaparte. "My father does not see much company at present; but during much the greater part of the twenty-four hours the whole of his family is assembled together in the parlour, principally for the purpose of killing time. No one about the house does anything, and I find it impossible to read or study. . . . I spend but very little money—as little as I possibly can; but I feel that I am living in a style to which I am not entitled, and to which, not being able to support it, I do not wish to become accustomed, more especially as it would totally unfit me for living in America. . . . I was always aware," he adds, "that America was the only country for me." These were the ideas in the mind of the plain and straightforward young man when his mother was planning marriages for him, and enumerating the advantages of his rank, and congratulating him and herself on the certain access to good society which his name itself was enough to secure him. Jerome had been wisely sent to Harvard on his first return to America when the plan of the marriage failed, and all his ideas were shaped, accordingly, upon American models. Soon after his final return to Baltimore, the catastrophe which his mother had all along feared came to pass; he fell in love, and with all expedition married a young lady not of any royal or noble stock, but a merchant's daughter in the town which he regarded as home. When his mother heard this news, which had even been confided to various branches of "the family" before it was made known to herself, her grief and indignation were un-

bounded; and the reader will for the first time sympathise a little with her disappointed ambition and wounded feelings. Her letters on this occasion, though full of petty pride and the falsest conceptions of the advantages of so-called "rank," are so real and consistent with the woman, that the rage and vexation in them move us to a certain pity for her, though the pity is mingled with amusement. There were many secondary aggravations too, which added to her humiliation. Her father, who had made the marriage, was glad thus to secure the young man's continuance near him, and not sorry, probably, to prove to his extravagant and haughty Betsy the superior wisdom of his own position; while, on the other hand, "the family" received the intimation of a union which, while it pleased the young man, settled his position and quietly dismissed him to the sober rank of a Mr Patterson, as relieving them of a claimant whom they had no desire to be unkind to, but did not know how to deal with. All these additional mortifications were in the mind of the exasperated mother as she wrote her angry acquiescence, with a great deal of grotesque and vulgar nonsense about her rank, but some real justification for her disappointment. The following letter will show this curious mixture of insane pride and genuine feeling—a combination such as fiction dare not attempt. Indeed the picture altogether is far too highly coloured for anything but fact and actual life.

"I had endeavoured to instil into him from the hour of his birth the opinion that he was much too high in birth and connection ever to marry an American woman. I hated and loathed a residence in Baltimore so much, that when I thought I was to spend my life there I tried to sum my

courage up to the point of committing suicide. My cowardice—and only my cowardice—prevented me from exchanging Baltimore for the grave. No consideration could have induced me to marry any one there after having married the brother of an emperor; and I believe that to this proud feeling I owe much of the respect and consideration shown me both in America and England. After having married a person of the high rank I did, it became impossible for me ever to bend my spirit to marry any one who had been my equal before my marriage; and it became impossible for me ever to be contented in a country where there was no nobility, and where the society is unsuitable in every respect to my tastes. The people, I believe, thought with me that neither nature nor circumstances fitted me for residing in Baltimore. At least I judge so from the profound respect and homage they have ever shown me; and I believe they perfectly agreed with me that both my son and myself would be in our proper sphere in Europe. I tried to give my son all my ideas and tastes, and in the first weeks after hearing that he meant to marry an American woman I was in despair. . . . I have considered now that it is unreasonable to expect him to place his happiness in the only things which can make me happy. (My happiness can never be separated from rank and Europe.) He has neither my pride, my ambition, nor my love of good company; therefore I no longer oppose his marriage. If he can be satisfied with living in such a place as Baltimore—and he is the best judge of this—I have nothing more to urge against it. I feel that I have no right to make another person adopt my standard of happiness. I would rather die than marry any one in Baltimore; but if my son does not feel as I do on this subject, of course he is quite at liberty to act as he thinks best."

The reader will perceive how easily this fervent letter might have been made into a dignified act of that renunciation which is so familiar to parents—the often bitter sacrifice of their own view of what is best to the foolish (they

fear), and in any case exasperating, preference of their son for his own absurd youthful opinions; but we fear that even sympathy will wince at the statement of the foundations, "rank and living in Europe," upon which the indignant mother's happiness is built. It is the very sublime of that *lordolatry* which is said to be so characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon race. We can do a good deal in that way in this country, but we doubt if such a *cult* was ever put into words so fervid before. The concentration of insane vanity, self-consequence, and ignorance in an intense but narrow and commonplace soul, could not have a more remarkable expression. It rises into a kind of lyrical outburst of sublimated vulgarity; and in the strength of this vehement feeling, paltry as it is, the enraged woman towers over the respectable humdrum relations, who, after all, had stolen a march upon her. Mr Jerome Patterson or Bonaparte was a much more estimable person than his mother, and actuated really by much finer sentiments; but her grand contemptuous tolerance for the man upon whom she has no right to impose her high standard of happiness, no doubt made him wince. "I cannot give him my ambition and pride," she says in another letter, evidently without a doubt in her mind that these were the finest things she could have given him; "and as it is unreasonable to expect him to be made happy by the only things which render life at all supportable to me, rank and living in Europe, I have no right to oppose his living in the way he likes best." "I never could have degraded myself," she cries again, with tears of rage and disappointment in her voice, "by marriage with people who, after I had married a prince, became my inferiors." Her grammar may be feeble, but

her meaning is clear, and these lofty sentiments raise her to the height of passion. What a wonderful spectacle is human folly! The discarded wife of Jerome Bonaparte, poor little monarch *manqué*, the K. of W., reckless spendthrift, whom she despises, and whose other wife had so long made Elizabeth Patterson's claims impossible, would seem to have small enough claim to the rank she adored. But at least she could persuade herself not only that she was a Bonaparte, but that the Bonapartes were real princes, with rank to confer at pleasure. The fervour of her faith would almost make it respectable, were it a little less absurd. As it is, it remains the most curious specimen of credulity and vanity and crazy self-importance which we have ever encountered; and considering the folly of which human nature is capable, this is saying a good deal.

The marriage of her son was the highest tragic climax in Madame Bonaparte's life. Evidently it was the only one of her troubles which really went to her heart, or discomposed her admirable confidence in herself and her good fortune. Jerome's establishment in life had been the subject of her most anxious thoughts and plans, and there is no telling what fictitious elevation the poor woman dreamed of for her son. Perhaps she thought that he too might have been a K. of W., or at least become an Altesse and ornament of courts. Nothing can be more funny than her apparent sense of some kind of odd relationship existing between herself and the Würtemberg princes, who sought her out, to her pretended surprise, in Geneva, and who were the relations of her successor in Jerome Bonaparte's affections. No doubt the pretty American, with her high-flown notions of rank,

amused these august personages. Various notabilities still more worth reckoning than the Prince of Würtemberg seemed to have aided in fooling her. Talleyrand, or so at least M. Didier says, said of her, "If she were a queen, how gracefully she would reign!" while no less a person than Gortschakoff made the foolish remark that, "Had she been near the throne, the Allies would have had more difficulty in overthrowing Napoleon." "It has been happily said," repeats Elizabeth's biographer, "that Elizabeth Patterson would have been a suitable match for the great Napoleon instead of the weak Jerome. Her wit, beauty, and ambition would have helped him to rise; while her prudence, common-sense, and practical wisdom would have taught him when to stop in his dazzling career." Gortschakoff's pretty speech was no doubt a *malicieux* compliment addressed to a pretty woman capable of swallowing the coarsest manufacture in that kind. But the solemnity of the repetition adds a broader ridicule still. The hard yet high-flown woman, with her narrow mind and self-absorbed imagination, was always commonplace to the depth of her being, and had not a fibre in her akin to greatness even of the most mingled kind. But no doubt it was grimly amusing to such of the real actors in the European drama as happened to encounter this mock heroine posturing with a flutter of plebeian delight before the footlights, to feed her sense of importance and flatter her to the top of her bent.

Jerome's marriage, however, changed, though perhaps not to the extent she threatened, her entire life. She had announced, in the letter above quoted, that she would leave her fortune to her son, and had given, as was her wont, a pompous little disquisition on the

wickedness of leaving money out of the family; but at the same time she had stated her determination no longer to economise as she had been in the habit of doing. "I shall in future," she says, "spend four thousand dollars a-year,"—which does not, after all, seem a very alarming sum; and she sent for her furniture and all her effects, with the view, apparently, of a final settlement in Europe. "It is my intention in future to live up to my income, and to make as good an appearance as I can in the world," she repeats. She was still only forty, and had by no means relinquished the enjoyments of society, so that her resolution was comprehensible enough; but she announces it with great bitterness, and without any of the satisfaction that might be supposed to attend a step so natural. Even the pleasure of abandoning the "miserable economy I was obliged to practise," was nothing to her in comparison with her son's desertion of her standard; and perhaps the poor woman was aware that expenditure was no pleasure to her, and that to punish her son she would have to get over her own inclinations likewise. As to what her means were, we are left very much in the dark. She had at one time a pension from the Emperor, but that must have ended with his downfall; and she had, for some time at least, an allowance from Jerome Bonaparte for their son: but it does not appear what she had from her father, from whom she never seems to ask anything, but only, in her first beginning in Europe, the aid of the "reputation of his fortune," which she believed would be of use to her, though, "alas! the substance is not mine." Mr Patterson indeed, in his will, took especial pains to point out the reasons why he did not leave "my daughter Betsy" the same fortune

as his other children. As it happened, however, the houses which he did bequeath to her, turned out of sufficient value to neutralise the intended punishment. But at the time of her son's marriage, the reader does not easily make out what is the "fortune" which she engages to leave to him. She "owes it solely to her own economy," she says; and she complains of being obliged to live in "the meanest, most comfortless manner," and to have been put to "beggarly shifts," in order to amass it; and this is all we know on the subject. But however it was obtained, we hear a great deal of this fortune. She writes about her will and the bequests she has made with a quaver of wounded feeling, which once more makes us sorry for the poor woman, who, after all, and amid all her ambition, had been an anxious and careful mother. "I leave to my son my property of every kind," she says, "with the exception of the portraits which A. Smith and Joseph have in charge. *These* portraits he, of course, will not regret. I have expressly, therefore, left all likenesses of myself to persons who are likely to value them. By a codicil to my will I have desired that the trifling things, such as my inkstand and the little ornaments of small value which I have worn, should be distributed to persons who had shown me some kindness; but all the money, and everything of value above twenty dollars, to my *natural* or most *unnatural* heir." These sentiments on the part of the disappointed mother are in strong contrast with the effusive delight of all the Bonaparte kindred, who now, no doubt, thought young Jerome well got rid of and settled down, to molest them no more. The congratulations of father and uncles must have been additional gall and wormwood to the mother,

who in her way was more long-sighted than her son, and saw what their friendly felicitations meant—the delight of disencumbering themselves from a claimant with whom they did not know what to do.

After this, Madame Bonaparte remained for several years alone, going from one Continental town to another—now in Florence, now in Geneva. It is evident that she did what she could to carry out her threat, and to sever herself from her family; and if fine company could have consoled her, she seems to have had enough of that: but her letters are no longer so interesting as when she had her son to regulate and find fault with. Now and then she bursts forth into a great piece of news, such as that of the marriage of her brother's widow to the Marquis Wellealey, before referred to. "She has made the greatest match that any woman ever made," she cries with enthusiasm; "and I suppose, now, that people will see that Mrs Caton was right in starving herself to keep her daughters in Europe." This theme sets her on fire with sympathetic eloquence. She cannot speak enough of "Mary's great good fortune," though the Marquis is sixty-six, very infirm, penniless, and over head and ears in debt—a pleasant description. "She certainly has had great luck; and Mrs Caton may with truth congratulate herself upon the judgment and patience she displayed in sending her daughters to Europe, and keeping them abroad till worthy advantages offered." This peculiar American inclination towards "rank" has a certain simplicity about it, like all the movements of the mind in an as yet undeveloped society. It is laughable, and it carries out with singular correctness one of the easiest of conventional beliefs; but at the same time there is, no doubt, some-

thing a little less vulgar than it seems in a faith which is held with such fanaticism. It is, like all enthusiasm for the unknown, full of exaggeration, and half excusable from the ignorance which gave fictitious charms to the dazzling prize. How was an American girl, or even maturer widow, to know what mysterious virtue might not lie in the coronet of a marchioness? The earnestness with which this crown of social glory was sought, was perhaps not unmingled with that yearning after an ideal which justifies any pursuit, even that of a title.

There is not, however, much to be gleaned out of the later letters of the now solitary woman. She picked up now a Russian princess, now a French blue-stockings, and continued her round of pleasures, though the appetite for them was beginning to languish. She directs her father at one time to give special attention to the investment of her money, as "my health is perfect, and I have the prospect of a very long life;" but at another time confesses to a friend that she is dying of *ennui*, and does not know how a person of her age can be amused—which is a pitiful confession. "I doze away existence," she says. "I am too old to coquet [*sic*], and without this stimulant I die with *ennui*. The princess tries to keep me up to the toil of dressing by telling me that I am a beauty. I am tired of life and tired of having lived. *Do try to get me a string of white topazes*. It is a bore to grow old." "Do not shilly-shally about these white topazes," she adds, describing with zest "a magnificent ornament for my head," which the said stones are wanted to complete. Altogether she presents to us the not unfamiliar apparition of that semi-young, semi-fashionable personage who is to be met with at all

the baths and balls of Continental Europe, tawdry and weary, but never failing in the old treadmill routine of so-called pleasure—the woman who is said "to know everybody," and has the air both to herself and others of frequenting "the best society," but who has neither friends nor object in life. At last, however, she finds it too much for her, or some natural longing towards home and family wakes in her mind, for at the end of a few years we find her returning to that America of which she had always expressed so hearty a hatred. She went carrying an entire wardrobe with her "to last her as long as she lived;" but apparently her biographer's means of knowing her private history stops when he has no longer her letters to draw upon. Though she was now in her fiftieth year, he informs us she was "still so beautiful that one who had received nothing from her but unkindness, and who saw her now for the first time, declared her to be the most lovely creature she had ever beheld." She remained in Baltimore for six years, then came back again to Europe with her son, to claim a legacy which Cardinal Fesch had left him. But the world had changed from that brighter sphere to which Elizabeth Patterson had come a quarter of a century before, in the might of irresistible beauty and all-reaching hope. She writes sadly enough to Lady Morgan, who had been her friend and occasional correspondent for years:—

"You will be less surprised to know of my arrival in Europe than I am to find myself here. I never supposed that I had preserved sufficient energy or moral courage to put into effect my inclination to absent myself from the *République par excellence*. A residence for a few months in the États Unis would cure the most ferocious republican of the mania of republics.

"I have been two months in France,

a period of time which has passed very dully. I have found few of those persons whom I knew and saw habitually five years ago. Death, time, and absence have left me scarcely an acquaintance in Paris. If our friends do not die, their sentiments change towards us so much that really I know not which is most distressing,—to hear that they are gone to the other world, or that they have forgotten us in this vale of tears, and have become strangers to us. . . . I have myself grown fat, old, and dull—all good reasons for people not to think me an intelligent hearer or listener. They mistake, however; I have really the talent to appreciate the high powers of all others without being able to contribute much to the liveliness of conversation myself."

Poor old, disappointed, downfallen pseudo-princess! She stayed only a few months in France, and so far as appears, never returned again to that country of her hopes and mortifications. Some years after Napoleon III. acquired the Empire, her son, "M. Bonaparte of Baltimore," came to Paris, and was received with great kindness by the Emperor, who, it appears, would willingly have accorded him his just place as a member of the Imperial family but for the protests of old King Jerome and of Prince Napoleon, whose present position as head of the Bonapartes might have been seriously interfered with had the sensible American recovered his rights as the eldest son of his father. He was, however, *réintégré dans la qualité de Français*, and offered a dukedom. But as this was on condition of giving up his claim, he refused the bait, as no doubt his mother would have done, notwithstanding her admiration of rank. She had long before refused the title of princess and a residence in Westphalia with a really charming outburst of wit and feeling, bidding her faithless husband remember that his kingdom was not big enough for

two queens. The Second Empire, however, though it brought no real advantage, at least was consolatory to the pride of the mother and son, and especially of the woman, whose faith in her rank was thus justified by the un hoped-for re-elevation of the extraordinary family to which it had so long been her pride and boast to belong, and which had, as she believed, made her superior to all her native surroundings.

But the time of triumph was over. She left America no more. By this time, probably the position she held in her native town, as one of the wonders of a past generation, was sufficient to content her, forgotten as she had found herself by the far-distant and more illustrious world for which she had so long sighed. After all, those brilliant episodes of European life, bought by many a struggle, occupied but a small part of her existence, and were divided from each other by long intervals of silent "vegetation" in America. And Baltimore was perhaps less distasteful to her after sixty than before. "She lived in a quiet boarding-house," her biographer informs us. "Her time was employed in recalling the brilliant events of her European career, and in obtaining safe investments for the savings of her large income." In this last stage of existence she seems to have become a garrulous yet caustic old woman, merciless in sarcasm and boundless in reminiscence,—now showing to her visitors the pink satin cloak of the Palazzo Borghese, the gift of Pauline Bonaparte—now trudging into the city, alert and penetrating, to collect her dividends and look after her securities. Wherever she went she carried with her "a carpet-bag containing valuables." Her old finery—her relics of the past—encumbered her rooms; and her old beauty was still dear to

her. She is said to have asked somebody just returned from Europe whether he "had not heard of her beauty on the Continent?"—and she took a not unnatural pleasure in her own portrait, and in recalling the conquests of the past. And now that the licence of age had emancipated her from all restraint, her speech was as sharp as it was ready. She had very little confidence in men, but liked women when they came up to her standard, "which was very seldom," M. Didier says; but this is an unusual trait in the character of an adventuress, who generally prefers men, and publishes her preference boldly. When somebody indiscreetly asked her how old she was, she replied sharply, "Nine hundred and ninety years, ninety-nine days, and nine minutes." Evidently she was not a safe person to stare and wonder at. Her grandsons, however—the sons of Jerome, who died before her—found a soft place in this worldly, self-occupied old heart. Her desire that one of them should appear, on going to France, "as befitted his birth, as the grandson of a king," even relaxed her purse-strings, and made her liberal; and she left her great fortune to be divided between these two young men, who, had her bold and unwearied struggle for their "rights" been successful, would now have occupied the strangely anomalous position of heads of the Bonaparte dynasty, and pretenders to the Imperial crown—if that bauble is ever to see daylight again. The Messieurs Bonaparte of Baltimore (though we believe they no longer bear that designation) may congratulate themselves upon the failure of their beautiful and daring ancestress to establish her claim, just as it might be.

Madame Bonaparte died in the

spring of this year, 1879, one of the last survivors, if not the very last, of the Napoleonic age, with all its strange chances, its sudden rises and downfalls. The history of the time is one big and somewhat vulgar romance, dazzling, yet at the same time often disgusting, the calm spectator, who can see how the tinsel eked out the gold, and "swore," as the French say, with the richer material. The life of Elizabeth Patterson is something like a reflection of this tawdry, yet not altogether unreal, glory. It was indeed, no doubt, enough to turn any girl's head to find herself on the very verge of the Imperial dais, amidst all the gilding and the glitter; and the romance of her position might have been touching had not her pride and hopes been so entirely prosaic and petty. Her wild visions of "rank," and the preposterous importance she attaches to her position, are like a caricature of the pretensions of "the family" itself. But whereas the claims of the family have been, by the extraordinary course of events, and by a luck more extraordinary still, more or less granted by European royalties, hers have never attained that justification, and consequently remain preposterous and absurd as ever. Those who would see how a narrow and commonplace mind can exist in the most romantic circumstances, and feel the elevation, and to a certain extent the inspiration, of such circumstances, without ever being in the smallest degree elevated or enlarged by contact with the extraordinary, will do well to read this curious book. It is badly done, and incomplete, but yet full of interest. The heroine of the story might have stepped out of Thackeray's imagination, like Minerva from Jupiter. No other hand is worthy of her.

WHIG REVIEWERS, AS PAINTED BY THEMSELVES.

THE publication of private correspondence is always a delicate matter, and in nine cases out of ten its expediency would be best determined by Lord Melbourne's favourite political maxim. This is especially the case where the correspondent has mixed in public life, and has borne his share of the jealousies and animosities distributed along its highways; but the remark holds good with a still keener force when letters take us into the more fervid atmosphere of literary debate. Literary quarrels last longer than political feuds; and their revival, after a lapse of time, generally stirs more bitter feelings and provokes more angry debates than the resuscitation of controversies that all parties in the State have ceased to feel as burning questions. The scene of party warfare is so constantly shifting, that the struggles of the present day must have a much more intense interest for us than those in which the preceding generation played its part; and even the personal characters of political leaders cease in time to generate bile in the stomachs of their opponents' descendants. A bust of the Duke of Wellington may be seen in any unexceptionable Liberal household, while a qualifying malediction does not necessarily come to a Tory's lips at the repetition of the name of Cobden. But with authors the case is different. While their books still continue to claim our attention, our interest in the writers naturally remains undiminished; and the estimation in which we hold both them and their works must necessarily be affected by any fresh side lights that are

thrown upon them, even after a considerable lapse of time has taken place.

If curses were a characteristic of the present dispensation, we should have reason to fear lest a retribution such as overtook the luckless seed of Noah's second son might be in store for the posterity of the editor who has revealed to the eyes of the world the 'Correspondence of the late Macvey Napier.'* The filial remarks by which the correspondence is prefaced, forbid, however, the supposition that in publishing this volume the editor foresaw that he was also uncovering his father's literary nakedness. It is more difficult to form any intelligible idea of the ends that were to be served by the publication of letters which could be gratifying only to those political and literary adversaries whom the writers handle with such charming frankness. To the 'Edinburgh Review,' in its present respected position, the appearance of this volume must have given a shock such as those of us who have long since sown our wild oats, and begun to think that we must have been always virtuous and sober citizens, will feel, when brought unexpectedly face to face with any forgotten fruit of our early excesses. Nor will the surviving friends and families of Mr Napier's Reviewers feel at all grateful for the reminiscences which these letters revive. Many of the gentlemen who corresponded with Macvey Napier have already had the advantage of biographers; others of them have themselves told their own stories still more advantageously; and the

* Selections from the Correspondence of the late Macvey Napier. Edited by his son, Macvey Napier. London: Macmillan & Co. 1879.

present supplement contains opinions of too candid a character to have escaped the ink-eraser of the careful memorialist, or to have clung to the memory of the complacent autobiographer.

There are few periodicals whose histories have been laid before the public with less reserve than that of the 'Edinburgh Review.' In the memoirs of Sydney Smith, and of Jeffrey, and in the autobiography of Lord Brougham, the story of its foundation and of its early career has been told at full length, and not without considerable diversity of statement. Each of the original contributors seems to have arrogated to himself the claim of having founded the 'Review'; each has told the story of the first council in a different fashion, and with more or less temper; and there was generally an uncertainty about the authorship of any early article that chanced to attract more than its share of passing notoriety. From the very first there appears to have been furious rivalry between the contributors themselves as individuals, and between the contributors as a body, and the editor. But in spite of the internal jealousies against which it had to contend—in spite of the generally fatal fact that the editor himself was a constant contributor to his own Review—the 'Edinburgh' flourished, and became a terror to literary evil-doers, and a praise and protection to the Whig party. By the time the Reform Bill had opened up to Jeffrey and his staff tangible rewards for their exertions, it was an assured success, and its editorship was a position that the best pens of the party would have been proud to hold.

When Jeffrey, on becoming Dean of Faculty, resigned the editorship of the 'Edinburgh' in 1829, for the certain prospect of political

preferment under the coming Whig régime, he had to cast about him for a successor. The qualifications were that the new editor should be a Whig, a resident in Edinburgh, and a man of some literary standing. Strange to say, these requirements proved a serious limitation to the field of selection. The great literary names of which Edinburgh could then boast were, with few exceptions, arrayed on the Tory side, and the chief supporters of the 'Review' were either Englishmen, or politicians whose avocations detained them in the immediate vicinity of Parliament. Mr Macvey Napier was a Whig, he had achieved a respectable literary reputation as editor of a new issue of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' and his duties as Professor of Conveyancing kept him permanently in the northern capital. He had also contributed some not very notable articles to the 'Edinburgh,' which Jeffrey received upon condition that he was not to lay public claim to the authorship, lest his occasional connection with the 'Review' might make Mr Brougham jealous! "He had all along had a strange jealousy of our admitting any new associates." The idea of silencing Mr Napier with the flattering fear of exciting Brougham's jealousy, shows a beautiful coat of editorial *finesse* overlying a rich vein of sarcasm. But in appointing Mr Macvey Napier editor, it must not be supposed that Jeffrey was resigning in his favour all the influence which the 'Review' had acquired for himself. He knew the measure of his successor's ability and strength of character, and he probably gauged, with a near approach to accuracy, what independence Napier would insist on claiming, and what measure of authoritative counsel he himself would still be permitted to offer. The correspondence in the present

volume affords conclusive evidence of this fact.

It was no easy task Mr Macvey Napier entered upon. He had a strong team of contributors, but it was also a most unruly one. Jeffrey had broken most of them to his own harness, and generally succeeded, partly by skill and partly by a firm hand, in making them answer the reins. But when the new driver mounted the box, there was a general disposition to show restiveness. Brougham, the powerful leader, thought that now the time was come when he might bolt unchecked, and precipitate the coach headlong into his own bold projects, for which the Reform movement seemed to him to have opened up the way. Macaulay, the stout wheeler, was quite prepared to take the whole draught towards his own side; and the others showed their independence of the driver by jibbing, shying, kicking, and plunging at every step. John Allen, the Holland House guard, instead of seeking to quiet the horses, was rather disposed to embarrass the coachman by giving him lofty advice about the duties of his position. Had there been anything like united action among the team, both machine and driver must infallibly have come to grief; but luckily for the 'Edinburgh Review' and Mr Macvey Napier, each contributor was determined that he and he alone was to be the motive power of its action, and that he was to have no community of aim with any of his colleagues.

We may well feel surprised at such a state of feeling in a *coterie* bound together by the same political principles, professing as its chief aim the advancement of the same party, and the diffusion of the same liberal views and cultivated tastes. But the most remarkable feature in these letters is the utter absence

of all regard for party interests whenever these did not immediately coincide with or promise to advance the private projects of the writers. We are made aware of most unpatriotic feelings—so far as disloyalty to Whig policy may be called unpatriotic—of petty jealousies and piques altogether unworthy of men who took upon themselves the duty of giving a tone to the worlds of politics and letters. Happily these were hid from the public, but it came all the harder on Mr Jeffrey's successor that he alone had to deal with the disagreeable dissensions of his staff. His task was all the more irksome that he knew himself to be in a great measure dependent upon the support of those who gave him most trouble. It is greatly to his credit that he succeeded so well under circumstances where an abler and more spirited editor would probably have disbanded his mutinous crew, and sent them away to man a privateer on their own account. It is the best thing we can say of Mr Macvey Napier that, with great inconvenience and frequent humiliation to himself, he kept his staff together, and saved both his party and his publishers from the scandal of an outbreak.

Brougham and Macaulay were the two mainstays of the 'Review' at the time when Mr Napier succeeded to its management; and the story of their jealousy and their rivalry, running as it does through the greater part of the present volume, forms its backbone of interest, and would add a most amusing chapter to a new edition of the 'Quarrels of Authors.' M'Culloch was its political economist, who would bear no utterances in the 'Review' except his own upon his special subject. In an evil moment, soon after he

took the reins, Mr Napier had allowed Spring Rice, afterwards Lord Monteagle, to write an article on the "Italian Economists," and M'Culloch was furious at so manifest an invasion of his special province. "Had he" (Spring Rice) "offered you an article on an Irish subject," he sneeringly writes, "you would have done well to take it;" and all that the perplexed editor could do was to feebly plead his right of selection, and that Spring Rice was "a highly respectable man." "A respectable man, I admit," rejoins the irate economist, "but without the slightest knowledge of the science. . . . Whether Rice writes sense or nonsense, is not to the point. He comes within my beat, and therefore I dislike him." Thomas Carlyle had already made his *début* under Jeffrey, and we find his reputation as a thinker increasing in a fixed ratio with the incomprehensibility of his utterances. Macaulay kindly remarks that "he might as well write in Irving's unknown tongue at once." There was, too, John Allen, the mouthpiece of Holland House, for the views of which the editors of the 'Edinburgh' had always shown a superstitious and nervous regard, accepting its politics as infallible and its taste as unquestionable. Allen, however, was a sensible man, and had a sounder acquaintance with questions of prerogative and the constitution than most of his colleagues; and he frequently gives Napier judicious, if patronising, advice regarding the management of recalcitrant contributors. Empson, who represented the Lansdowne circle, was a steady worker, and perhaps the best "general utility man" whom the 'Edinburgh' could command; and in that capacity he seems to have come in for general execration from all the rest of the staff.

Brougham in particular characterises his articles as "written in the riddle and flower style—i.e., a constant saying of something fine and puzzling." And strange as it may seem to the men of the present day, one of the most enthusiastic, but at the same time one of the most snubbed contributors, was Mr E. Lytton Bulwer, whom men of the present day remember as Bulwer, or the first Lord Lytton. He complains that the 'Edinburgh Review' is unfriendly to him, and still he seeks to woo its good word by contributions and friendly letters to the editor. "Scarce a single recent novel," he says, "of the smallest pretensions—not to excellence, but to common circulation—but has been reviewed by the 'Edinburgh.' Mine only have been passed over. To success was opposed the contempt of silence; failure only has been honoured by remark. For favour or hostility I care little, but in the most hostile criticism I look for a certain fairness." Mr Bulwer was only admitted into the court of the Gentiles, and knew not the amiable feelings with which those who were within the inner circle of the 'Edinburgh' regarded the success of extraneans. His contributions to the 'Review' were, however, marked by all that elegance and taste which he afterwards brought to such a ripe and brilliant maturity; and even his advocacy of Whig principles was characterised by a patriotism and public spirit which were distinctly wanting in the articles of the other contributors. "*Mais que diable allait il faire dans cette galère?*"

The rivalry between Brougham and Macaulay completely overshadows the jealousy and squabbles of the other Reviewers. Both were great men, whose weaker sides we are sincerely sorry to see exposed in a way that cannot fail to detract

from the estimation in which we would all wish to hold them. The contrast between the two is forced upon us, and we cannot see that the advantage lies upon the side of Macaulay. If there is a good deal that is grotesque, there is much that is grand in Brougham's character. With a genius that might have done anything brilliantly, he tried most things and did them well: he was orator, statesman, philosopher, lawyer, politician, and leader-writer by turn, and in all these walks he more than held his own with those whose professional business it was to tread them. Had he fallen in with a party that merited fidelity from him, or colleagues whom it was possible for him to respect, his name would have occupied a much higher place in history than has been yet assigned to it. But it is in the capacity of a contributor to the 'Edinburgh Review' we are dealing with him at present. In this respect there was no one who could claim more consideration for himself or his opinions at Mr Macvey Napier's hands. He had been a contributor from the first, if he had not a share in originating the venture; and his vigorous style and bold ideas had helped in no secondary way to make the 'Edinburgh' a success. Even his blunders had been of service in advertising this quarterly. His review of the "Hours of Idleness," if a mistake, at least made the 'Edinburgh' notorious, and did not draw down upon it derision like the "This will never do," with which Jeffrey welcomed the "Excursion." Macaulay was merely a recent acquisition; and though knowing his value as "young blood," he seems to have been over ambitious when he fancied he could make up to the 'Review' all and more that the older contributor had been to it. He was not only

bent upon making himself its ruling authority in literary criticism; he was also anxious to establish himself as its oracle in questions of current politics. Hence arose the first great difference between him and Brougham in the period embraced within the volume before us. The Revolution of July was of course hailed with acclamation by the Reviewers, who appear for some unaccountable reason to have imagined that they had had a great deal to do with bringing it about. John Allen gravely offers his congratulations to Mr Napier "on the late brilliant events in France," and rejoices that the "whole of the policy since 1815 had been subverted in three days." "Nothing left of the battle of Waterloo but the subversion of the military power of Napoleon,"—a remark which goes far to justify the belief that Holland House did not share in the general feelings of the nation with regard to that glorious victory. Of course there was a general competition for the privilege of recording the Revolution in the forthcoming number, and Macaulay and Brougham were each equally resolved to have the article to himself. The former announces his intention to set off at once for France, where he would be "in the best society, that of the Duc de Broglie, Guizot, and so on," to qualify himself for the task. But Brougham writes to his editor that he "must beg, and indeed make a point of giving you my thoughts on the Revolution, and therefore pray send off your countermand to Macaulay." Mr Macvey Napier seems to have found himself in the position of Buridan's quadruped, with the additional disadvantage that there was to him a decided danger in turning to either side. However, he decided in favour of Brougham, who had unquestionably the better claim.

But Macaulay was not disposed to yield with a good grace, and hotly gave the editor a bit of his mind, telling him that he "always knew that in every association, literary or political, Brougham would wish to domineer."

"The present constitution of the 'Edinburgh Review,'" he says, "is this, that at whatever time Brougham may be pleased to notify his intention of writing on any subject, all previous engagements are to be considered as annulled by that notification. His language, translated into plain English, is this: 'I must write about this French Revolution, and I will write about it. If you have told Macaulay to do it, you may tell him to let it alone. If he has written an article, he may throw it behind the grate. He would not himself have the assurance to compare his own claims with mine. I am a man who acts a prominent part in the world; he is nobody. If he must be reviewing, there is my speech about the West Indies. Set him to write a puff on that. What have people like him to do, except to eulogise people like me?'"

With such fiery contributors, an editor who could not take his quota of being bullied would have soon found his ranks thinned. Brougham was of course triumphant, and his article on "The Late Revolution in France" came out in the October number of 1830, but fell very flat compared with the brilliant article in which the contemporary issue of the 'Quarterly' dealt with the same event. Mr Macvey Napier had a very difficult task to appease Macaulay, who, with some reluctance, forgave the editor, but refused to admit the justice of his decision. The connection with the 'Edinburgh' was, however, a considerable convenience to both. Brougham appears to have appreciated the pecuniary, as well as the political, advantages accruing from it, for he writes from

the Court of Chancery to "his dear Professor," "Don't be on any ceremony, but remit me the money in your own way;" and Macaulay had still his reputation to make, both as a literary and as a public man.

All through the Macvey Napier correspondence, whenever Macaulay and Brougham come in contact, the same bitter feelings of jealous rivalry crop up. Macaulay complains (*passim*) of the "puffing" which Brougham's published speeches meet with in the reviews that followed their appearance. About this time he took it upon himself to become Brougham's champion in the House in answer to some animadversions on him from John Wilson Croker; but he frankly confesses to the editor that it was rather to make use of the opportunity to give Croker a "dressing," than for any kindness towards the Lord Chancellor. A presentation in favour of Macaulay's brother to a living of £300 a-year in Warwickshire proved, however, a peace-offering on the part of the Chancellor, and Macaulay admits that he "is in good humour with him." "It was the first living he had to give, and nothing could be done more handsomely." But this proved to be merely a temporary salve to an open sore.

In 1833 Macaulay was appointed a member of the Supreme Council of India, and sailed for Calcutta to take up his post in the spring of the following year. Lord Brougham's position, too, was soon to undergo a change. We have little account in these letters of the growing differences between the Chancellor and his colleagues during the latter period of Earl Grey's Ministry and Lord Melbourne's short-lived first administration; but when the Reformers again came back to office in April 1835, and the Premier, backed by Lord John

Russell, determined to keep him out of the Great Seal, Brougham attempts to wreak his vengeance upon them in the 'Review,' much to Mr Macvey Napier's editorial discomfort.

"Ever since you succeeded to the management of the 'Edinburgh Review,'" his lordship writes with bitterness, "I have found that my assistance was reckoned, justly, God knows, a very secondary object, and that one of the earliest friends of the journal, and who had (Jeffrey will inform you) enabled it to struggle through its first difficulties as much as any one, or even two, of the contributors, was now next thing to being laid upon the shelf. . . . Ex-Ministers are always in the wrong, I know full well. However, if the base and truly jobbing plan of some *would-be* Ministers and their adherents (in London) had taken effect, and you had, 'for fear of giving offence,' kept all politics out of the last, as you had done out of the number before, my belief is that the 'Review' would have died in the course of the spring."

He moreover foresees a possibility of the 'Review' being "turned into a tool of Holland House, or any other class of place-loving politicians." A political Ishmaelite, such as the ex-Chancellor had now become, was no safe counsellor in criticising the Whig Ministry; but though the 'Review' would not allow Brougham to attack Lord Melbourne's Cabinet, it admitted animadversions upon Earl Grey's administration, which of course implicated Brougham himself. Empson, who prompted Napier in the Lansdowne House interest in the same way as John Allen conveyed the counsels of Holland House, came in for a full share of his lordship's indignation in consequence. He denounces an article of Empson's as "a vile and most false attack," declaring that "it is quite clear that his ignorance is more gross than any but the most extreme charity can make one be-

lieve possible;" and having cited an instance of "great shabbiness," he asserts that "this is not the first time I have seen the same artist acting in the same way." Another article by Empson on the "State of Parties," in 1837, calls forth from his lordship the following criticism of the Reviewer and his model. "He is a bad imitator of Macaulay, who does himself with all his extraordinary powers incalculable injury, by laying down a rule that good writing consists in saying as many striking things as can be crammed into a given number of lines. But this in a imitator makes sad work."

It would be amusing, if it were not also in many respects painful, to watch the course of controversy between Lord Brougham and his editor during this period. The strong language of Brougham on the one hand; the sweeping denunciations of all who differed from his views of the political situation—his entire confidence that he, and he alone, could save the ancient influence of the 'Review'—and his severe criticisms of the contributions from other writers, which could almost be called brutally frank, had they ever been intended to meet any other eyes save those of the editor,—present a most striking contrast to the *ad misericordiam* appeals of Mr Macvey Napier, to his elaborate vindications of his editorial independence, and to his often piteous remonstrances regarding his obligations to the Ministerial cause, which the other was now attacking with scarcely dissembled hostility. Mr Macvey Napier's position could scarcely at that time have been called a happy one. The weighty political authority which the 'Review' had acquired by leading the popular feelings that culminated in Catholic Emancipation and the

Reform Bill, was now suffering a relapse from the feebleness of the Melbourne Government and the jealousies that subsisted between the chief Whig circles. It now drew little or no strength from its Scotch connection, to preserve which had been the primary object of Mr Napier's appointment to its management. Macaulay was in India, and though from time to time he sent home valuable literary contributions, he was of little political service to the 'Review.' Brougham, who had been its mainstay in politics, had broken from the ranks, and his articles were likely to be of more danger than assistance to the aims which it had to serve.

"Who," as Lord Brougham tells the editor in 1839, "is the Minister connected with the 'Review' now to extenuate the party service? And what are the great measures and principles on which the Government and the Tories are at issue now as they were under my administration? It is a mere question of ins and outs, of keeping possession of office and doing jobs for Edinburgh people. You hear, no doubt, a deal of these people, but all you hear is a mere echo of place-men and place-hunters who only want to keep in the men that have the giving away of good things. Depend upon it, the 'Review' never before was in this position."

It is a curious literary phenomenon that the relations of these two should at this time have been able to continue without an open rupture and a breaking off of their connection,—Lord Brougham allowing himself to make most harsh and even insulting remarks regarding Napier's editorial policy; and Macvey Napier turning a deaf ear to all his lordship's remonstrances, and carefully cutting out all that seemed dangerous from his lordship's articles, which were, doubtless, the very passages upon which Brougham set most store. Then,

moreover, smaller men were permitted freely to have their fling at him in the 'Review.' Pillans attacked his educational projects, M'Culloch sneered at his "six-penny systems" for disseminating useful knowledge, and Empson performed the still more offensive task of punishing his political aberrations. It is no part of our present duty to go into the public history of Lord Brougham, or to examine the policy of the 'Edinburgh Review,' and so we shall hazard no conjectural explanation of an alliance maintained in the teeth of so much contention. Probably Brougham was determined that no opposition on the part of the editor should bar his prescriptive rights to have a leading voice in the 'Review's' politics. And it would have been rash at this time for the 'Edinburgh' to have assumed that Lord Brougham would never again return to office under a differently constituted Whig Ministry.

In 1838 Macaulay returned from India, where he left a most useful memorial of his official labours in the rough draft of the Penal Code. He was soon on his old footing of intimacy with the 'Edinburgh' and of hostility towards Brougham, whom he declares to "have a devil." In one of his first letters after his return he thus sums up Brougham's position:—

"I should say that this strange man, finding himself almost alone in the world, absolutely unconnected with either Whigs or Conservatives, and not having a single vote in either House of Parliament at his command except his own, is desirous to make the 'Review' his organ. With this intention, unless I am greatly deceived, after having during several years contributed little or nothing of value, he has determined to exert himself as if he were a young writer struggling into note, and to make himself important to the work by his literary services.

And he certainly has succeeded. His late articles, particularly the long one in the April number, have very high merit. They are indeed models of magazine writing as distinguished from other sorts of writing. They are not, I think, made for duration. Everything about them is exaggerated, incorrect, and sketchy. All the characters are either too black or too fair. The passions of the writer do not suffer him even to maintain the decent appearance of impartiality. And the style, though striking and animated, will not bear examination through a single paragraph; but the effect of the first perusal is great, and few people read an article in a review twice. . . . His wish, I imagine, is to establish in this way such an ascendancy as may enable him to drag the 'Review' along with him to any party to which his furious passions may lead him,—to the Radicals, to the Tories, to any set of men by whose help he may be able to revenge himself on old friends, whose only crime is that they could not help finding him to be a habitual and incurable traitor."

Let us now allow Brougham to play his part as critic, and probably with as much justice on his side as that which we have just seen meted out to him :—

"It [the Essay on Bacon] is, as you say, very striking, and is no doubt the work of an extremely clever man. . . . But it has two grievous defects—a redundancy, an overcrowding of every one thing that is touched upon, that almost turns one's head; for it is out of one digression into another, and each thought in each is illustrated by twenty different cases and anecdotes, all of which follow from the first without any effort. This is a sad defect in Macaulay, and it really seems to get worse instead of better. I need not say that it is the defect of a very clever person—it is indeed exuberance. But it is a defect also that *old age* is liable to. The other fault you have alluded to, but I will expose it after Macaulay's own manner of writing. 'You might as well say that all men balance themselves in order to walk, and therefore there is no science of

mechanics; or that every child learns to suck, and therefore the Torricellian experiment was of no use to science; or that the dullest of human beings goes to his point by one straight line, and not by the two other sides of a triangle, and therefore there is no geometry; or that the most ordinary workman, be he mason building an arch, or cooper making a cask, forms a curve by joining straight lines short in proportion to the whole length, and therefore the fluxional calculus was no discovery; '—through two or three pages, as easy to fill with such trash as it would be unprofitable. In fact, this way of treating a subject is somewhat mistaking garrulity for copiousness; but I am now complaining much more of the matter than the manner. Greater blunder never was committed than the one Macaulay has made of the Inductive Philosophy. He is quite ignorant of the subject. He may garnish his pages as he pleases with references; it only shows he has read Bacon for the *flowers* and not the *fruit*, and this is indeed the fact. He has no science at all, and cannot reason. His contemporaries at Cambridge always said he had not the conception of what an argument was."

We have dwelt so long over the quarrels of the Titans that the disputes between the Centaurs and Lapithæ of the 'Review' must be briefly dismissed. Like their betters, the lesser contributors to the 'Review' seem to have given the editor as much trouble as they were able, and to have been actuated by not less selfish motives, in making use of its columns, than those which they so freely attributed to Brougham. A more pleasurable contrast to the malice, hatred, and all uncharitableness through which we have had to wade is to be found in the residuum of literary gossip which the correspondence contains. Mr Macvey Napier does not seem to have possessed, in any measure, the truest characteristic of a really capable editor—the power of attracting talent and then keeping it. A

good few brilliant names flutter like moths about his candle for a little and then disappear into other regions. Dickens, whom Jeffrey had brought in as a recruit, proposes "to come out strongly against any system of education based exclusively on the principles of the Established Church;" and as this subject did not recommend itself, he wished to send an article on "Punishment by Death." We find two letters from Thackeray, one of which mixes up acknowledgments of a cheque with complaints about the "editing" of his articles. "From your liberal payment," he says, "I can't but conclude that you reward me not only for labouring, but for being mutilated in your service. . . . I mourn still—as what father can help doing for his children?—for several lovely jokes and promising *facetiae* which were born and might have lived but for your scissors, urged by ruthless necessity. . . . Oh, to think of my pet passages gone for ever!" A keen sense of humour was certainly not one of Macvey Napier's characteristics, and in his time the 'Review' exhibited none of that early levity which Sydney Smith had infused into its system. The acquisition of Mr (subsequently Sir) James Stephen was the means of modifying its irreligious reputation; and his "Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography" continue to be among the most popular, if not the most brilliant, of the reprints from the 'Edinburgh.' John Stuart Mill was another of Napier's Reviewers, after he had ceased to carry on the 'London and Westminster,' and his articles did not a little to shake the credit for economical authority that Malthus and McCulloch and other sounder if less speculative writers had built up for it. Probably one of the wisest counsels that Brougham ever gave to Macvey Napier was regard-

ing Mill. Speaking of an article on "Democracy in America," in the issue of October 1840, in which the germs of not a few of the doctrines with which Mill's name was afterwards to be so closely identified are visible, Brougham solemnly says, "Take care of the writer, whoever he is, as he will assuredly get you and the side of the question he is on into serious scrapes." But the Whigs in those days had no distaste for abstract speculations which were a long way removed from the practical politics of the hustings, and nodded benignantly to the most dangerous doctrines, little foreseeing that they were so soon to take root inside the limits of their own party.

When such kindly feelings prevailed among the Reviewers themselves, it would be idle to fancy that they were either very tolerant or civil towards their contemporaries of the Tory periodicals. Professor Wilson was then in the height of his influence as the chief contributor to 'Blackwood,' and a serious thorn in the side of the 'Review.' Mr Macvey Napier and he had crossed each other's paths professionally, but both were possessed of more gentlemanly feelings than to allow such a fact to embitter their political antagonism. But what can we say of the fatuity that could have included such a passage as the following in Macvey Napier's correspondence? It is in a letter from James Mill, written shortly after Wilson had been elected to the Moral Philosophy Chair in Edinburgh University. "You grieve me by what you predict respecting the Professorship of Moral Philosophy. From what I had heard, I rejoiced to think that you would be the man. I reckon the appointment of a proper person a matter of first-rate importance; and the one to

whom you allude makes one sick to think of him," &c., &c. Wilson's career as a professor speaks for itself; Mr Macvey Napier's claims remain where they were: but surely no son with any feeling of delicacy for a father's memory would have exhibited him in the light in which he appears in this extract. We much prefer to turn to the kindly intercourse between the editor of the 'Edinburgh' and Wilson, when the 'Recreations of Christopher North,' was reviewed in the quarterly by George Moir. There is a letter from Wilson, the most genial and kindly in the whole volume, recognising the generous feelings which had dictated the inclusion of the *critique* in the 'Review.' After enumerating the obstacles that had prevented him from calling and thanking Mr Napier in person, Wilson concludes by saying: "As the honour you have conferred upon me was unsolicited, it is felt by me to be the greater; and I beg you to accept my warmest acknowledgments of your kindness, and to believe that I am, with most sincere regard, your brother professor."

In proportion to the hatred of Wilson and of 'Maga' manifested by the Reviewers, was the avidity with which they caught at any crumbs of criticism thrown in their way from that quarter. Macaulay's letters furnish a most ludicrous instance of this. In the famous Sadler controversy, now almost forgotten, when Macaulay took up the sticks for Malthus against the views of the member for Leeds, the 'Review' was bitter, unjust, and *doctrinaire*; and the contempt with which Macaulay spoke of Sadler was probably not lessened by the prospect of meeting him on the hustings at Leeds at next election. Sadler replied and Macaulay re-

taliated; and the controversy was summed up very much to the disadvantage of the latter in 'Blackwood's Magazine'* under the signature of Christopher North. To this Macaulay did not reply, on the ground that he thought "a contest with your grog-drinking, cock-fighting, cudgel-playing Professor of Moral Philosophy, would be too degrading;" and he loftily adds, "I could have demolished every paragraph of the defence." When Wilson, however, pens a generous review of Macaulay's 'Lays,' the latter feels no degradation in pocketing the praise, and requests Napier to tell the professor that "his conduct has affected me as generous conduct affects men not ungenerous." How far Macaulay's generosity could go in political warfare may be inferred from his parting kick to Sadler, written after the poll at Leeds, where the latter found himself in a minority. "Sadler is mad with rage, and I cannot help pitying him, though he does not deserve it. There is no baseness to which he has not stooped, no malicious art to which he has not had recourse. But enough and too much of him; his public life is, I think, over."

Mr Macvey Napier died in February 1847, and was succeeded in the editorship of the 'Review' by Empson, who was at that time Professor of Civil Law at the Haileybury College, and who had married Jeffrey's only daughter. To the qualifications of the new editor for his office his father-in-law bears the following testimony a few months before Napier's death: "I send you the last of these weary proofs. Empson is unreasonable with his endless corrections. It will be a relief when we are fairly done with them; for not only does his dirty

* Vol. XXIX. (1831), Art., "Mr Sadler and the Edinburgh Reviewer: a Prolusion."

linen require a deal of washing, but he will be soiling it again after we have done our rinsings."

This volume, we are told, is a "selection" from the 'Correspondence of Macvey Napier,' and a very pretty selection the reader will admit it to be. We cannot help feeling some curiosity as to the principle which regulated the editor's choice in picking out the letters that we have been going over. If there were other letters that presented the Reviewers in a more amiable light, that would have exhibited them as eager to sacrifice self for their political principles, and as loyally making common cause with Macvey Napier for securing the success of the periodical with which they were connected, the editor of this volume is responsible for a grave injustice to many distinguished literary memories. If, on the other hand, the Macvey Napier Correspondence contained proofs of even more overt malevolence and jealousy among the contributors, what a bear-garden must the staff of the 'Review' have been at the time! But we frankly confess that the motives which could have led to the publication of such a volume as the present are to us entirely incomprehensible. It injures rather

than advances the editorial reputation of Mr Macvey Napier. It presents the majority of his contributors in a worse aspect than any in which they have hitherto appeared to the public eye. It exposes the shifty, selfish, and altogether unpatriotic character of the Whig policy of the period. And it would do no good to the 'Edinburgh Review' itself, but for the fact that that quarterly has, under abler management and less reckless writing, attained a position that cannot be impaired by any revelations of its previous history. Nor can it be urged that the volume is of any value to the student of literary history. It is more likely to be chiefly appreciated by the *chiffonnier* who delights in picking up the tattered pieces of authors' characters. The publication of Mr Macvey Napier's "Correspondence," if it does nothing else, will make literary men chary of putting their antipathies frankly on paper, if there is a chance of their seeing the light in the generation immediately succeeding. The editor is almost always regarded with safety as a literary father confessor, and this trust is not one which should be rudely shaken by the publication of such "selections" as the present.

SYRIA.—CONCLUSION.

THE MARONITES.

HALF-WAY between Damascus and Beyrout, on the French diligence route, lies the village and post-station of Shtora. It is situated at the foot of the eastern slope of the Lebanon, and on the edge of the great valley or rather plain of the Buka'a. A road practicable for wheeled vehicles leads from here along the plain to Baalbec, distant about forty miles—a pleasant road, for the first hour skirting the lower Lebanon spurs, and winding between hedges of roses in bloom and through richly cultivated country. I turned off from it before it became hot and dull, at the village of Muallaka, celebrated as containing the mortal remains of Noah, whose tomb is shown to the credulous stranger. Its dimensions are 104 feet long by 10 broad, and it conveys some idea of the size of the human race before they evolved backwards as it were to their present dimensions. As Noah lived to the age of 950 years, and built an ark large enough to contain specimens of every living thing on the face of the globe, there seems to be no reason why he should not himself have been over 100 feet high. I did not, however, visit his tomb, which is much revered both by Christians and Moslems, but turned into the gorge down which plunges the brawling Berduni, to the picturesque town of Zahleh. The towns of Muallaka and Zahleh meet in this gorge, which is scarce a mile long—the former spreading out at its *débouchure*, and the latter clinging to the steep sides of the valley, where it widens above the gorge. Muallaka is a purely Moslem village, while Zahleh contains a population

of 15,000 inhabitants, amongst whom there is only one Moslem family. The narrow street which separates these contiguous towns forms also the boundary of the province. Muallaka is in the *vilayat* of Syria, and is governed by Midhat Pasha from Damascus; while Zahleh is the largest and most important town in the province of the Lebanon, and is governed from Baabda, the seat of administration of Rustem Pasha. As we approach it, we are at once struck by the absence of minarets, and the presence of domes and crosses, for it boasts of no less than eighteen churches, with a fanatical, fighting population, of whom two-thirds are Greek orthodox, and one-third Maronite, who all vehemently opposed the introduction of Protestant missionary schools. There is one notwithstanding, presided over by an English lady. In 1860 the turbulent propensities of the inhabitants were fully gratified, for the Druses came down upon them, and the place suffered terribly. It is a lovely, peaceful-looking spot now, with its well-built whitewashed houses, picturesquely clustering upon the steep hillsides, their piazzas and balconies with their high columns perched one above the other; while the Berduni, issuing from a romantic chasm in the Lebanon, plunges down to the second gorge below, turning in its impetuous course a quantity of corn-mills, and irrigating a small flat area which is hemmed in by the steep surrounding hills, and is thickly planted with tall poplars. Thither we descended to seek a cool retreat from the noon-day sun, and found ourselves in a

labyrinth of intersecting streamlets and rope-walks. Higher up, where the valley becomes narrow, enterprising purveyors of public recreation have erected *cafés*, where the citizens resort in the cool of the evening, and, perched on stages over the torrent, sip "mastic" or *raki*, and eat raw gherkins to stimulate their palates, singing their uproarious and discordant native songs while they play draughts or dominoes. The streets are so steep and rough that it is far easier to walk than to ride; but there is, in fact, nothing of interest to see in Zahleh beyond the extreme beauty of its position, and its general air of prosperity and comfort.

As Zahleh does not boast of any place of entertainment for strangers, we were put up by a private family; and from the roof of the house, or rather the house below ours, revelled in a charming view while the ladies of the establishment were preparing our repast. They were two good-looking sisters, both married; but she who was our hostess blushed at the disgrace which she felt attended her admission, when, in answer to our inquiries, she told us she had no children. Her sister, who was ostentatiously nursing a fat baby, looked at her with compassion, and I think tried to make some excuse for this omission; but although my friend and travelling companion was a tolerable Arabic scholar, he felt hardly up to pursuing the subject. They gave us an excellent dinner, and the neighbouring gossips gathered round to see us eat, sitting on their heels, and gazing at us admiringly. The furniture of a Syrian house is limited to mats, and quilts, and cushions; and the attitude of its occupants, when they are not on their heels, is necessarily more or less recumbent. Ours was invariably so—as, until one is accustomed to it, heels are uncomfortable to sit upon per-

manently. So far as the charms of female society are concerned, a Christian's house is a more amusing one to lodge in than a Moslem's, but then you have to pay for it. It is much more difficult to satisfy the pecuniary expectations of Christians than of Moslems: indeed, one would imagine that it was rather the Koran than the Bible which denounced the love of money as being the root of all evil—so much keener are Christian than Moslem cupidities; but as the result of a more enlightened financial selfishness is a higher state of civilisation, I suppose it should be encouraged. Unless we can stimulate the Moslem to devote his whole energies to preying upon his neighbour, and can increase his greed for money and his necessities generally, the cause of reform in Turkey is hopeless. I am not now speaking of the bureaucratic class, who have been either educated in Europe or taught by contact with enlightened foreigners how "to turn an honest penny," as if pennies could be dishonest,—but of the simple peasantry and provincial folk generally, who are not mixed up in administrative vices, and who suffer from the absence of those avaricious instincts which enable Christians to thrive and prosper when the Moslem earns but a scanty living—not because he is less industrious, but because he is less covetous and astute. These considerations occurred to me on the following morning, as my charming and agreeable hostess pouted indignantly at the ridiculously large present she received in proportion to the service she had rendered. The unsophisticated Moslem—where Cook's tourists have not penetrated and introduced civilised ideas—would have been bowed down with gratitude with half the amount.

Zahleh stands at an elevation of

about 3000 feet above the sea-level, and from it we immediately began to rise; for we were clambering up the shoulder of the Jebel Sennin, the snow-clad mountain so familiar to those who gaze at the Lebanon range from the balconies of the hotels at Beyrout, and which attains an altitude of over 8300 feet. We soon left the vineyards behind us—for Zahleh is the most important wine-growing place in the Lebanon—and toiled up the steep grassy slopes for an hour and a half, until we found ourselves among patches of snow, and over 6000 feet above the sea. Here rhododendrons in full bloom were abundant, while violets and forget-me-nots peeped out from between the rocks. From the ridge we had a magnificent view back over the Buka'a and Coele-Syria; while at our feet lay stretched the wild gorges and valleys of the Kasrawan district, which we were about to explore, with the sea in the dim distance. We kept along this ridge in a northerly direction, with snowy Jebel Sennin towering above us on our right, for some time before we began to descend into the grand amphitheatre of the Wady Sennin. Here rocks rose precipitously all round, and streams dashed tumultuously down them, ultimately to join the Nahr-el-Kelb or Dog River. We scrambled along the narrow ledges, looking down giddy heights, until we came to a precipice formed by an extraordinary mass of cracked limestone: it was rent by deep fissures to its base, while it projected in crags and pinnacles of the strangest form, amid which our path led. These crags were curiously fluted and honey-combed by the action of the weather; and here and there a *crevasse* yawned beneath our feet with apparently no bottom. The grey of the rock, and the fantastic forms of its gigantic masses, contrasted wonderfully with

the dark-green of the pine-foliage which mingled with it; while lower down, expanses of light-green mulberry cultivation indicated that we were once more approaching the abode of man. After a delicious bath in a crystal stream, we crossed another ridge, and over the whole side of the hill we were descending we saw well-built, comfortable-looking houses scattered, peeping out of masses of luxuriant vegetation, and inviting us to a mid-day halt, of which we began to stand in need. This was the village of Bestimka. We had scarcely entered it before we were most warmly but not disinterestedly pressed by a well-to-do householder to dismount in his garden. He spread mats for us under the shade of his fruit-trees, supplied us with sour milk, which, together with the viands we had brought with us, served for our lunch; and we could not help contrasting the ease and comparative wealth with which we were surrounded, with the more poverty-stricken and squalid aspect of the villages in which we had been lately sojourning in the Anti-Lebanon.

For the remainder of the afternoon our ride was enchanting: along terraces covered with mulberry, amid crags down which cascades dashed and to which pine-trees clung, between hedges of roses, and under the shade of wide-spreading walnut-trees, till we found ourselves in another noble amphitheatre, the lower portion of which was richly cultivated; and in the midst of its gardens we looked with interest on our night-quarters—the village of Mezra'a. We had not met many travellers during our day's march, but our first question had always been when we did meet one, "How far is it to Mezra'a?" and our second, "Who is the best man there to go to for lodging?" We never received two replies in the least degree similar to the first query;

while every one seemed to concur in the opinion that for hospitality there was no one to compare with Abdulla the son of Jirius the priest. So, on entering the village, we immediately made inquiry for Abdulla, and half-a-dozen volunteers to find him were soon forthcoming; for it seemed well known that at that moment he was not at home. Soon he appeared, a handsome, pleasant-featured man, delighted at the importance with which our arrival invested him, and well pleased, no doubt, to show us the magnificence of the accommodation which he could place at our disposal. It turned out to be nothing less than an entire mansion, newly built, and which, though it was neatly furnished with mats, had never been occupied. We stabled our horses in the lower floor, while we ascended to the upper by a flight of steps on the outside, leading to a veranda commanding a delightful view. Three or four spacious rooms opened out of this, and of one of these we took possession, while Abdulla, the son of Jirius the priest, sent for some women-kind from his father's house, which seemed to be his present abode. Afterwards, when we became more intimate with him, he explained to us that he was to be married next year to a young lady in the neighbourhood, and that he had built this house in anticipation of the happy event. In the meantime, he introduced us to his sister, who came carrying a basket of tender mulberry-leaves—for the whole female population was engaged in providing for the wants of the young silk-worms; and having seen our room made comfortable, we started off under our host's escort to pay a visit to Jirius the priest himself.

There is no street or collection of houses grouped closely together in these higher Lebanon villages, but they are for the most part

scattered among mulberry-plantations over the hillsides. Mezra'a contained about 1500 inhabitants, and its gardens and vineyards covered a considerable area. The silk culture forms the principal industry of the inhabitants at the period of our visit. The worms were just out, and infinitesimally small. Only the youngest and tenderest leaves were being gathered for them, which girls were neatly and tightly packing away in hand-baskets, while others were engaged in the less elegant occupation of smearing large flat trays with cow-dung; and before each house numbers of these trays were drying in the sun, preparing to be the first home of silk-worms. When we arrived at the house of Jirius the priest, his daughter brought us out a trayful to inspect. The old man himself was seated on his balcony smoking a *narghileh*, and enjoying the soft evening air and the lovely view. He was a venerable patriarch, retired from active sacerdotal functions, and apparently spending a peaceful old age in the bosom of his family. The whole population of this village was Maronite; and strolling through it we came upon one of the churches—a massive square building, which had been in old time a Matawaly fort. We were joined here by the priest who officiated in it,—a jovial, middle-aged man, who turned out somewhat of a wag, and who appeared to be esteemed not so much for his saintly character as for his wealth—Abdulla informing me, in an undertone of the deepest respect, that he was worth a sum equivalent to £4000, and was the richest man in the village. Indeed Maronite clergy as a rule, unlike the priesthoods elsewhere, are the richest class in the country; and it is doubtless largely owing to this fact that they exercise so powerful a political influence on their flocks.

When, in addition to controlling the consciences of their congregations, they can also control their pockets, it is evident that, by a judicious system of spiritual and temporal squeezing, they may increase both their capital and their influence to any extent. Individually, they are often large landed proprietors; while, collectively, the Church owns a most undue proportion of territory.

From the ridge on which we sat under the shadow of the village church, we could see one episcopal residence, and several convents and monasteries, all occupying the most beautiful sites; for it must be owned the Church has an eye for the picturesque, and all representing large landed possessions, and accumulated wealth. To live upon their flocks like leeches, and to stimulate their religious bigotry and fanaticism, seems to be the principal function of the Maronite priesthood. No doubt there are excellent and devoted men among them, but all the practical difficulty of administering the Lebanon is created by the Church; and a turbulent bishop, whom it had been found necessary to exile, was, at the time of my visit, keeping the whole country in a ferment. The priest took me into the lower part of the curious old building, which was now used as a church, and showed me the vault, which in old times served as a place of refuge for the defenders. It had been supplied with water by a subterranean passage, which had fallen into disrepair, and it communicated with the room above, which was now the church, by a trap-door. The walls were several feet thick, and composed of huge blocks of stone. My reverend guide, who had been smoking and laughing somewhat boisterously at his own jokes, now took me round to the door of the church, laid his cigarette temporarily on the door-

sill, and with an instantaneous change of manner, proceeded to kneel and pray vigorously while I inspected the internal decorations, which were of the rudest description. Out of consideration for his cigarette I did not stay long, so as to enable him to finish his prayers and return to it before it went out—a feat he succeeded in achieving, picking it up as well as his jokes at the point where he had been temporarily obliged to suspend them for devotional purposes.

On our return to our lodging we found a sumptuous repast prepared for us; and Abdulla, the son of Jirius the priest, had provided wine of the best, and turned out to be of a most convivial temperament, and much discomposed at the comparative rapidity with which we despatched our meal; for he had evidently anticipated making a night of it in feasting and drinking. He ate principally with his fingers, which was possibly one reason why he could not keep up with us; but then he also talked incessantly, and was extremely interested in political matters, and especially desirous to know whether Syria was not about to be occupied by England or France, or possibly by both. Throughout the Lebanon, the idea seems firmly fixed in the minds of the people that they are to pass shortly under the domination of a Western Power,—a prospect they look forward to with great eagerness. The Maronites would naturally, for the most part, prefer that that power should be France; but the Greek orthodox and the Druses would hail with delight the advent of a British army of occupation. The entire Maronite population of the Lebanon does not exceed 150,000. Abdulla told us that there were many persons in the village who owned property to the amount of £1000; and, indeed, gave us to understand that he had more

than that himself. On the whole, he professed himself satisfied with the *régime* under which he lived, admitting that he enjoyed protection of life and property, and had nothing to complain of. His idea of a French occupation was merely based upon the vague notion that it would bring more money into the country; but it seemed to me that the Maronites had quite as much money as was good for them, considering how fond they were of it, and how easily, notwithstanding, they allowed themselves to be robbed of it by the Church.

A small boy came and danced and sang before us ere we finally turned in; and the usual group of admiring females lingered to the last moment, while Abdulla disappeared reluctantly, evidently feeling that it might be long ere he should be able again to provide himself with such a good dinner, in his own house, at somebody else's expense. For his hospitality was equal to that of a first-class hotel, so far as prices went, though they took the form, not of paying a bill, but of making presents; so that in our cordial adieux the next morning, we were able to keep up the fiction that we had been indebted to him for a generous and disinterested hospitality, and parted from him as from one who had conferred upon us deep and lasting obligations.

For an hour and a quarter after leaving Mezra'a, we continued to ascend through vineyards, mulberry-plantations, and wheat-fields carefully irrigated upon the steep hillsides, till we reached an elevation of above 6000 feet, when the cultivation nearly ceased, and on its verge, amid a pile of limestone crags, came upon the ruins of Kalat Fakra, which, considering their extent and importance, do not seem to have received the attention they deserve. A few hundred yards to the left of the limestone rocks,

and standing by itself, was a large square tower, partly ruined, which was possibly an old Roman fort, on the portal of which appears an inscription which, according to Ritter, contains the name of the Emperor Claudius. The huge masses of rock that separate this tower from the temple, which has been carved out of them, are most fantastic in form, and in places one is almost at a loss to know what is natural and what artificial. The temple, the walls of which are composed of the solid rock, is twenty yards by forty, and its area is now filled with fragments of columns, carved blocks, and square masses of stone. The façade apparently consisted of a portico supported by six massive columns. The carved pedestals of three of these are still standing, but the columns themselves are broken and prostrate. The outer court was thirty yards square, and a portion of the side walls was composed of the natural rock *in situ*. A row of smaller columns, all in fragments, formed the façade. About a hundred yards to the south, near a small stream, were the remains of another smaller building, the lower portion of the massive walls of which were still standing. It was divided by a transverse wall,—one enclosure, which was probably the inner temple, being seven yards square; the other was the outer court, ten yards square. On the borders of the stream were massive stones in such a position as to suggest that a reservoir had in ancient times existed here; and all round were strewn fragments of columns and carved blocks. We lingered longer over these interesting remains than we should have done had we realised the length and difficulty of the journey before us, and we suffered for it later in the day; but my companion could not resist a sketch, and I found abundant occupation in making the rough measurements,

which, however, are only approximate, as I had no tape, and it was impossible to pace areas so filled up with huge masses of rock that it was necessary literally to climb across them; but I have no doubt that these little-known ruins would amply repay a more lengthened investigation than we could afford them. It is possible that Kalat Fakra has already been identified by antiquarians as the site of some Roman town mentioned in history. I have not, since visiting the ruins, had access to books to find out whether this is so or not. It was supplied with water led over a low hill from the Neba-el-Leben, or milk spring. About two miles distant we followed the conduit to this spot, and found a magnificent stream gushing out of the base of the precipitous limestone range with a force and volume sufficient to turn a dozen mills. From here it dashes down in a roaring cataract till it disappears from view in a limestone chasm, where it precipitates itself in a fall of about a hundred feet. One can walk up to this fall from below, but the rocks almost meet overhead, approaching each other so closely just below the fall, that an active man with good nerves could easily spring across. It was, in fact, a feat which would have been eminently tempting in the days of one's youth, and even at a more mature period of life. I felt doubtful whether one ought to resist the instinct which seems implanted by nature of risking one's neck for the fun of the thing. But the object which from this point riveted our attention was the Jisr el Hajar, a huge natural bridge which spanned the gorge a hundred yards or so below the chasm, at an elevation of about a hundred feet from the bed of the torrent. The gorge here is about a hundred and fifty feet across, and the bridge itself is so broad and level

that a good carriage-road could be made over it. It is, in fact, a flat piece of limestone rock, from ten to fifteen feet thick, but on the under side it is so perfectly arched as almost to seem artificial. The regular path leads across this bridge, but we had deviated from it in order to visit the spring above. Below the bridge the stream dashes down between precipitous walls of limestone by a series of cascades until it reaches the valley far below, where it is divided into streamlets for irrigating purposes; and the luxuriant hillsides bear testimony to its fertilising influence. The whole scene was inexpressibly grand and interesting, and well worth a journey in itself. When we add to this wonder of nature and the romantic scenery which surrounds it, the interest that attaches to the remains of an ancient civilisation which lie thickly strewn in the immediate vicinity, it is a matter of surprise that the attractions which they afford should have been allowed to remain so neglected, and that, in these days of enterprising travel, this part of the Lebanon should still be comparatively so little known and explored. For half an hour after leaving the natural bridge we traverse a wild rocky country to the Neba-el-Asal, or honey spring, a magnificent jet of water which gushes out from below the road. It is neither so full in volume nor so picturesque in its source as the milk spring, but it contributes a copious water-supply to the rich valley below. Both these springs are sources of the Dog River, or Nahr-el-Kalb, which was called by the Greeks the Lycas, or Wolf River, and which empties itself into the sea about ten miles to the north of Beyrout.

We now traversed a wild desolate region till we came to a patch of cultivation surrounded on all sides by precipitous craggy hills called Shobrah.

There are no houses here, but the peasants come up and cultivate it from the nearest village, frequently camping overnight. We scarcely see how we are to get out of this walled-in vale, so steep are the hills all round; and although we are at an elevation of about 6000 feet above the sea, the mid-day sun is blazing down upon us, and glaring upon the white rocks up which we are to scramble. It is not a tempting prospect, but there is evidently no escape, except by sheer climbing; so we dismount and reluctantly brace ourselves to the effort. For nearly an hour do we toil up the abominable apology for a path, driving our ponies before us—the flat plates of iron with which they are shod scraping and slipping over the smooth sloping surface of the rock—till we reach the crest, and then are blandly informed by our guide that he has lost his way. This would have been excusable in a guide whom we had brought from a distance; for goat-paths are not easily distinguishable from real ones on these wild mountain-sides; but inasmuch as we had taken great trouble at Mezra'a to find a man who knew the country, and as we were now not above six hours distant from his permanent home, we felt justly indignant, perhaps more so because we were so excessively tired and hot with a climb, part of which we now began to find was unnecessary; so we had to hark back, passing two very curious punch-bowls, which were perfectly round and looked like craters of extinct volcanoes. We had actually reached the snow, but we were rewarded by a magnificent view over the valley of the Adonis or Nahr Ibrahim, and slightly consoled by a curious and very picturesque bit of scenery which we should not otherwise have seen. When we got back to the place where the right path diverged we

had a second climb to the crest, and then commenced a descent more villanous if possible than the road by which we had mounted. We now began to long for signs of a habitation and a halting-place: there can be no doubt that the most exquisite scenery to a certain extent loses its charm if one looks at it on an empty stomach.

In places during our journey to-day there had been almost a carpet of wild flowers. Where the rocks gave them room they bloomed luxuriantly. Many of them I did not know by name, but I recognised the burnet, the sword-flag, especially among the young crops, where there were any—and wild flax, and a fine specimen of Persian iris. When we got to the bottom of the hill we found ourselves upon a ledge or natural terrace overlooking the gorge of the Adonis, and along this we rode for an hour and a half to the head of the valley: for above all things we had set our hearts upon seeing Afka, once the abode of the Goddess of Love, and the source of the Adonis; and we had determined not to linger by the way, even to eat, until we had reached it. And when at length, on turning the angle of a projecting spur, the sacred, or perhaps, more properly speaking, the profane, spot burst suddenly upon us, it was impossible to withhold an exclamation of astonishment and delight; and we felt it incumbent upon us to pause, even at the expense of suffering nature, in order thoroughly to take in the marvellous and unique beauty of the scene. We found ourselves on the lip of a bowl from which the river issued through a gorge, and which was almost completely surrounded by sheer cliffs, varying in height from one to two thousand feet, their crevices filled with snow, and here and there a hardy pine clinging to the jutting crags. A couple of hundred feet below us

the small circular area was a mass of vegetation, consisting chiefly of walnut, oak, and juniper trees; while there were patches of cultivation appertaining to a squalid Matawaly village, just peeping out from under the foliage at the head of the gorge. By the side of the stream near the base of the cliff a clump of walnut-trees indicated the site of the once celebrated temple, and close to it was a picturesque bridge, from under which the torrent plunges in a mass of foam, and then precipitates itself in three cascades into the gorge below; but the most remarkable feature is the main source itself, which issues from a deep cavern in the side of the cliff by a fall of about forty feet. It is joined by two other smaller streams, which also break their way out of the side of the rock at some height above its base, forming altogether a combination of springs so singular for situation, and surrounded by such a weird and fantastic natural formation, that it was no wonder it appealed to the æsthetic imaginations of the votaries of Venus, and became the scene of a touching mythological episode. It became worse than this; for in this temple of Apheca, beneath the crumbling walls of which we halted for our scanty meal, those rites sacred to the goddess took place, which at last became so impure that the temple itself was destroyed by the Emperor Constantine. When we lunched on the margin of the brook it was clear as crystal, falling in pellucid cascades from its three-fold source; but it is said that it is occasionally coloured red with mineral matter, which the ancients regarded as the blood of Adonis, shed by the wild boar before he was sought for and resuscitated by Aphrodite. While the cult of the goddess had its seat at Apheca, that of Adonis took place at Byblos, the modern Jibeil, situ-

ated about four miles to the north of the mouth of the river which bore the name of the god. There can be little doubt that the legend sprang from the early Phœnician worship of the dual principle. For Byblos was said to have been founded by Baal Kronos, a Phœnician monarch; and it is not difficult to trace the connection between the early Canaanitish religion of Baal and Ashteroth with the myth of Osiris and Isis and the legend of Venus and Adonis. Aphek, in the land assigned by Joshua to, but never occupied by, the tribe of Asher, has been identified with Afka, or Apheca.

We regretted that we had not time thoroughly to explore a spot so enchanting in itself and invested with traditions and associations of so interesting a character. Unfortunately we had lingered too long over the ruins of Kalat Fakra in the morning; and the delay involved by the subsequent loss of our way had made it problematical whether we should succeed in reaching our night-quarters at all. This would not have signified had we kept our baggage-mule with us, but we had sent him by a short cut to the town of Ghazir, which we had fixed upon as our sleeping-place; and we now found ourselves, late in the afternoon, still many hours distant from that spot, with every prospect of having to rough it out on the mountains. There was a Matawaly village, it is true, scarce a mile distant; but the bigotry, squalor, and dishonesty of the Matawalies form a combination so little tempting that the hillside would have been preferable. So we determined to make a push for Ghazir, and reluctantly turned our backs upon the mystic grove amid which the walls of the temple are crumbling. In places these are standing to a height of ten or twelve feet from the ground; and

the blocks of which they are composed are so massive that there is no reason why they should not continue to remain as they are until they are toppled over by an earthquake.

We had hoped to explore the valley of the Adonis itself, but our guide told us there was no possibility of taking a horse through the narrow gorges and chasms by which it forces its way to the sea. He said that even on foot it was difficult and dangerous climbing. But I have no confidence in his accuracy, and would recommend the examination of this valley to the tourist in search of the picturesque. I have not heard of any one having explored its recesses. The paths from Afka seem to keep along the tops of the hills on either side; and to our intense disgust we found ourselves, instead of following the stream as we expected, retracing our steps along the ridge for an hour, and then, instead of plunging down into the gloomy gorge, we turned away from it. We saw enough to tempt us sorely to linger where we were for the night, and make an exploratory dash in spite of the guide in the morning; but unfortunately I was due at Beyrout to catch a steamer, and could only gaze wistfully over a landscape whose secrets it remains for some more fortunate traveller to discover. Still we had no reason to complain, for though our path led us away from the precipitous sides of the gorge of the Adonis, it wound over a shoulder, from the crest of which the view in the evening light was one of exquisite beauty; and from it we descended into a smaller valley, where pendulous forests of oak clung to the hillsides, and the limestone formation cropped out in the strange fantastic forms common to a dolomite region. We had to scramble down stone stairways, the descent seaward now becoming

rapid and trying to man and beast. In mercy to ourselves and our animals we dismounted, and one secluded nook again almost induced us to halt; for, nestling among the rocks which enclosed a perfect garden of vines, mulberries, and fruit-trees, were the picturesque abodes of the Maronite peasants, who had settled themselves here high up among the mountains in a tiny amphitheatre, sheltered by woods and rocks, and hidden away from the busy world in a corner of their own. And now, as we traversed another belt of wild uninhabited country, the night began to close in, and in the growing darkness the natural obstacles seemed to assume greater proportions. Every peasant we met added on an hour to the distance still to be traversed, and at last we became so sceptical as to our whereabouts, that we took one of them for an extra guide. We had now crossed over from the valley of the Nahr Ibrahim or Adonis into that of the Nahr Máamiltan, a thickly populated and luxuriantly cultivated district, the beauties of which were concealed from us by the darkness; but the numerous lights which twinkled on the hillsides all round, bore testimony to the density of the population. At last, after fifteen hours of saddle and foot scramble, the welcome sounds of a chorus of barking dogs indicated our approach to a large town.

For the last hour the descent had been rocky and precipitous in the extreme, and it was a marvel how our ponies found their way in the darkness along the dangerous ledges and over the steep slippery rocks. But our troubles were not at an end: it was between nine and ten at night, and we had still, in a town of about 8000 inhabitants, to find our mule. We made for the monastery to which the muleteer had been directed, and where we hoped

to find accommodation ; but after much knocking and shouting, a surly half-dressed ecclesiastic put his head out of the window, and gruffly told us that the monastery was full, and that he had sent away our muleteer hours before, and he did not know where he had gone. We tried at one or two good-looking houses where the inhabitants had not gone to bed, but they were sleepy and disinclined to be hospitable ; and we wandered helplessly about in the dark, objects of suspicion and distrust to innumerable noisy curs. At last a priest, who spoke French, came and took compassion on us. He had a friend, he said, who would take us in, and another friend who would go in search of the muleteer. So he took us to a very nice house, the occupants of which were a young man and a young woman and a baby. The baby was the young man's, and the young woman was his sister-in-law who was performing the duties of wet-nurse as an act of sisterly accommodation. The wife was not visible, but they both seemed extremely anxious to make us comfortable, and sent out to wake up the chemist and buy us tea. We were to share their apartment with them ; but as it was a large one, and the baby was of an aimable and easily soothed type, that did not much matter. In fact, under the circumstances, there seemed no impropriety in our occupying the same room with the young man and his sister-in-law — quite the contrary. I half suspected the priest intended to join us, he seemed so very much at home ; and we made ourselves as agreeable as we could, famished men, in the worst possible temper at there being no immediate prospect of food, could do, when suddenly the news arrived that the mule with all our raiment and provisions had been found. Our hearts bounded with joy ; but our hosts, as the prospect

of well - remunerated hospitality vanished, became despondent. We were received with open arms in our new quarters, and had quite a levee after dinner, notwithstanding the advanced hour of the night. The priest turned out a most enlightened and intelligent man ; and as we were here at the very headquarters of Maronite feeling and sentiment, it was interesting to hear his political opinions and those of our host and his neighbours.

I found they differed considerably from those of their religion with whom I had already conversed. As a rule, the instinct of the Maronite is to consider that his religion should be the dominant influence in the Lebanon, and that, practically, the governor-general of the province should be the servant of the Maronite episcopate. Ever since they have enjoyed the special protectorate of the French, their pretensions have become thus exaggerated ; and it is only of late, since a republican form of government has modified the clerical influence in the administration of the foreign affairs of France, that the more intelligent section of the Maronites see that they had better enjoy the privileges which now insure them protection and material prosperity, than struggle for an influence which would only increase religious animosities in the Lebanon against them. Notwithstanding the special relations which exist between England and the Druses, who are the traditional enemies of the Maronites, the latter are most anxious to cultivate the friendship of the British Government ; for the more intelligent among them cannot conceal from themselves that, in the present state of France, even French interests in the East might be sacrificed to the intensity of anti-clerical animosity, and the Maronites would find themselves abandoned by their present protectors, on the

ground that the tie which binds them to France is rather an ecclesiastical than a political one. The disposition which has recently manifested itself in England to rush to the rescue of any sect in Turkey, provided that it bears the name of Christian, and can draw up petitions complaining of ill-treatment by the Turks, has encouraged the Maronites to believe that, on the sentimental ground of "Cross against Crescent," they would find the sympathies of the so-called Liberal party in England ready to pronounce in their favour, and undertake, if necessary, a religious crusade in their behalf. Indeed, among other sects as well as the Maronites, I found the idea prevalent that a British occupation of Syria was probable. And they indulge in the vague hope that such an occupation would benefit them, and might possibly lead to their ultimate independence; but what race or religion would dominate in the end they are unable to decide—each naturally thinks his own would—though they cannot deny that much bloodshed must necessarily precede any such result, and that in the meantime they have practically nothing to complain of. My hosts and the priests informed me that popular feeling in Ghazir was pretty equally divided between those who were satisfied with the political condition of things as they are, and with the administration of the existing governor-general, and those who desired to see a change in the executive which should give them a larger share of political power. He believed, and rightly, that any attempt on the part of the Maronites to grasp at more than they have got, would bring them into dangerous collision with other sects, and might lead to injury to the Church. The fact is, the Maronite priesthood is so much better off than any other priesthood in the world, that the less attention

they attract to themselves the better. They are all-powerful among their own flocks. Practically every Maronite community is self-governing, and the ecclesiastical interest is dominant. To want to extend that influence over Druses and Greeks would be suicidal, and this the more sensible perceive. But the more ambitious among the bishops are absorbed with a craving for complete rule, and are never satisfied unless their control of the governor-general is supreme. In conversation with Maronites, I failed to discover one substantial cause of grievance. In no part of the world is a peasantry to be seen more happy and prosperous; and however much the Turkish Government may be to blame in its administration of the Moslem part of its population in other parts of Syria, there can be no doubt that the Maronites of the Lebanon are far better treated than they would be in any country where the head of the State professed the Greek instead of the Mohammedan religion. No doubt this has been due to external pressure, which Western Powers would not dare to apply to a European power under similar circumstances. On the other hand, it is only fair to give the Maronite Church its due. It carefully feeds and pampers the goose that lays the golden egg. If it knows how to squeeze a pliable peasantry, it is far too wise to oppress or tyrannise over them. Hence Church farms are eagerly sought for, because in good years the tenants get as large a share of the produce as on private estates; while in bad years the liberality of their priestly landlords insures them against the misery too often in store for ordinary farmers. It is a question, therefore, whether they are not better off, treated as children by a priesthood which despoils them with foresight and discrimination,

than they would be if left to take care of themselves, a prey to the competitive plundering of the uncontrolled lay usurers of Christian sects generally. As, with the exception of England, there is no country in Europe which enjoys such complete religious toleration as Turkey, it is evident that a small sect has great opportunities for favourable development, provided it can be exempted from the onerous pecuniary burdens which the embarrassed financial condition of the empire have rendered necessary.

Since the special regulations of 1860 have imposed upon the Maronites a tax far too light considering the resources of their country, they have, in spite of clerical absorptiveness, been happy and prosperous; but it would be absolutely impossible to deal with all the religious sects in the country in this exceptional manner, considering the present state of the Turkish exchequer.

The two problems, the solution of which underlies all reform in Turkey, are those of religion and revenue. They are both problems which can be far more satisfactorily settled on the spot than from Constantinople; and hence it is that the surest method of introducing reform is by a process of decentralisation. Without giving to other *vilayets* the exceptional privileges which the Lebanon enjoys, the power of the *vali* or governor-general of each province might be increased, while his responsibility to the central government would be proportionally augmented. The *vilayet* might be periodically assessed according to its resources, but the method of collecting the revenue would be a matter for the local government to determine. A provincial administration, presided over by an intelligent governor-general, would be far more competent to reform existing financial and sectarian

abuses than a fluctuating ministry at Constantinople, liable to be acted upon by influences brought to bear by intriguers from those distant provinces hostile to the action of the governor-general. Each *vali* would then feel that his reputation was at stake. He could not plead interference from Constantinople as an excuse for religious persecution or a deficient revenue. If he failed to remedy abuses and give satisfaction he would be alone to blame, and could be at once withdrawn, and the empire would be consolidated by the removal of just causes of discontent springing from intrigues by which powerful men in the provinces can resist any attempt to reform abuses upon which they thrive at the expense of the poorer part of the population.

Many of the evils from which poor Christians suffer arise from the oppression of their wealthy co-religionists. And the Moslem governor is unable to assist the poor Christians in his struggle against the rich one, because the latter has influential friends among the Christian *effendis* at Constantinople, who support him against the Moslem *vali*. Of the two, the Christian governing element at Constantinople is a greater obstacle to reform than the Mohammedan; for the Moslem is a more tolerant man in his treatment of rival Christian sects than those rival Christian sects are of each other; while in the provinces there is no Moslem priesthood to fatten upon the peasantry of their own religion, nor do rich Moslems squeeze the life-blood out of their co-religionists as rich Christians do. The power of Christians in Turkey, and especially at Constantinople, to co-operate in the work of reform, if they chose to exercise it, is very great; for they fill high offices in every department of State, and take a most active share in the government of the

empire. Unfortunately they are the class most open to the corrupt influences which maintain abuses. It is not, therefore, either for them or their co-religionists to denounce as incorrigible oppressors those whose efforts to introduce reform they most persistently thwart.

One or two instances which have come under my own immediate notice will illustrate the influence for evil of the rival sacerdotalisms as they exist in Turkey. A Protestant was murdered not long since under circumstances which left no moral doubt in the minds of those who investigated the case, of the guilt of the man suspected of the crime. I assisted in collecting the evidence, and went through it carefully with those who were charged to examine into the attendant circumstances. The chain of proof was so strong that the man was arrested, and upon one occasion I attended the *medjlis*, upon which, if I remember rightly, the Christian members preponderated, when he was brought up for examination. The prisoner was born of Christian parents, belonging to the orthodox Greek Church, but in early life had come to England, where I had seen him twenty-five years previously, a specimen convert to Protestantism, and making a very good thing out of his conversion. His only hope of escape now consisted in a recantation of this error, and in the profession of an ardent adherence to the Church of his fathers. Conviction then became impossible. The bishop and the entire "orthodox" community of the place in which the murder had been committed took the case up. The head of the police, who was a Moslem, but open to influences, which are doubly powerful where the salaries of officials are not regularly paid, was won; the Christian members of the *medjlis* did not dare to incur the hostility of their co-religionists by

an impartial administration of justice when the murdered man was a Protestant. One or two of the Moslem members proved themselves incorruptible, but they were unable to bring out the facts of the case, because not only the witnesses, but some of the officials who had been charged with the prosecution of it, were threatened by the bishop with his spiritual displeasure if they ventured to press further in the matter; one, consequently, withdrew altogether. And in spite of the most active exertions of those who desired to have a fair trial, which should elicit the truth and bring the criminal to justice, it was found impossible to proceed with it with any such hope or expectation, and the man was ultimately released on bail, with a verdict which amounted to not proven. Christians allege that it is difficult to bring a Moslem to justice who has murdered a Christian, but it is still more difficult to bring a Christian to justice who has murdered one of a rival sect, if the sect or the murderer predominates in the community. On one occasion I was travelling with a friend in another part of the country when he was robbed of a pistol by a guide who belonged to the Catholic Church. He had originally been "orthodox," but found it convenient to change his religion; and he had actually been in the service of a Catholic archbishop. It was rumoured that he had been dismissed by his Eminence for misconduct. We put the necessary machinery in motion to have the man caught, and his character and antecedents investigated. It occurred to me that the archbishop could throw considerable light on the subject, and I suggested to the official who was most energetically prosecuting his researches, that we should apply for information and assistance to the head of the Church

to which the thief belonged, and in whose service he had been. I was astonished to find my proposal scouted as most injudicious. "Why," said the intelligent and experienced functionary, "the thief is a convert; and so far from helping us to find him, the archbishop, if he knew we were after him, would do all he could to screen him!" For the credit of the archbishop, I hope this was a libel on his character; but whether it was one or not, it came to pretty much the same thing. We were afraid to risk the experiment in consequence of the notorious manner in which Christian ecclesiastics in Turkey perpetrate injustices and screen crimes, in order to gratify their religious animosities, or to promote their sectarian ends. So far as the Turks are concerned, the most hopeless feature of their case lies in the fact that the wealth of the country is in the hands of their bitterest enemies. It is only natural that, secretly, all Christians, no matter what their position, rank, or sect, should wish for the overthrow of the dominant religion, and that they should take advantage of the power which their financial resources give them to encompass the destruction of the Moslem, either by corrupting or impoverishing him. Hence it is that Moslems instinctively fear all schemes of reform which shall increase the power of the Christians, and the Christians are not anxious to see reforms inaugurated, if the result is to improve the administration generally, and so to consolidate the Turkish empire by the prevention of abuses which they now *exploit* to their own profit. Our late experience in Cyprus is an illustration of this. There can be little doubt if the Bishop of Citium were asked which rule he preferred, British rule or Turkish, he would

unhesitatingly reply in favour of the latter.

We constantly see in private life a domestic situation not very dissimilar to that which the Turk and the Christian occupy relatively to one another. In public, the Turk plays the part of the harsh and cruel husband, and the Christian that of the poor, ill-used, downtrodden wife: but when you come to get behind the scenes, you often find that the wife is at heart a shrew; that she generally manages to get her own way; practically controls all the domestic arrangements, and squeezes as much money out of her husband as she wants; and that, though he scarcely suspects it himself, and glories in the external semblance of an arbitrary and despotic matrimonial authority, the husband is in reality a hen-pecked and sorely abused individual. There are other political *ménages* quite as bad as that of Turkey, but all Europe does not feel itself called upon to interfere and set the domestic squabble right. In Russia, for instance, because the Government is not Moslem but Christian, the sufferings of thousands of exiles and political convicts awake no outbursts of sympathy. Christians are not Nihilists in Turkey, because they are too well off, and having the purse-strings of the country in their hands, have no sympathy with their less fortunate co-religionists in Russia, who have entered upon a crusade for the annihilation of private property. The massacre of the liberties of thousands, we may almost say of millions, of Christians, is not, in modern parlance, called an "atrocious," provided those who perpetrate it also bear the name of Christian and wear the varnish of modern civilisation. In the case of Bulgaria, the massacre had its origin in a popular revolt, stimu-

lated by political and religious fanaticism, and instigated from abroad. It was not a deliberate official act, perpetrated with the sanction of the Government, yet it appealed so strongly to the Christian sensibilities of the Powers of Europe, that they allowed hecatombs to be slaughtered to avenge it. And there can be no doubt, that if tomorrow the Turkish Government were to exile its Christian subjects in the same proportion annually as the Russian Government does, the latter would be the first to invoke Christian sympathy in their favour. So far as the unhappy victim is concerned, it can make no difference what the religious tenets of his oppressor may be. To Europe it makes all the difference in the world. Possibly the Creator may take the victim's view of the case. I refrained from propounding these views to my friend the priest at Ghazir, as he probably would not have agreed with them. And indeed the subject has been worn so threadbare, that I must apologise for alluding to it; but as many of the authorities who have written and spoken upon it in England, have found it so interesting that they have constructed their very decided opinions for the most part out of their intuitive consciousness, without local investigation, they will readily understand how difficult I find it to have lived and travelled at various times both in Turkey and in Russia without having formed an opinion of some sort.

The Maronites derive their name from a certain heretical monk named Maron, who is said to have lived about 400 years after Christ, and whose heresy consisted in the dogma that Christ was animated by one will only. As the Catholic Church knew to the contrary, his followers, though otherwise Romanists, were

compelled to form a sect of their own, and were only subjected to the authority of the Pope about the year 1600, after a Collegium Maronitarum had been founded at Rome, where a number of Maronite scholars distinguished themselves. A thorough investigation as to the nature and composition of the will of the Saviour appears to have enabled them to arrive at a conclusion satisfactory to the Pope; and a reconciliation took place, from which they have, ever since, derived great political benefit and many substantial advantages.

The Maronite Church still possesses many special privileges, including that of reading Mass in Syrian, which answers quite as well as Latin, as nobody can understand it, except at the village of Malula, as I have already described. The inferior clergy also retain the right to marry. The patriarch is elected by the bishops, subject to the approval of Rome. The monasteries in the district round Ghazir, and in the district of Bsherreh, are, some of them, very handsome, and contain about two thousand monks. In some of them are printing-presses for their liturgies and other works.

Ghazir is beautifully situated at an elevation of twelve hundred feet above the sea, and about four miles distant from it by the road. There are an abundance of churches and monasteries in the town and its neighbourhood. The Italian, Capuchin, and the Jesuit monasteries occupy the finest situations, and from both magnificent views are to be obtained: to the east, looking up the valley by which we had descended the night before; and to the west over the Bay of Juneh, round which richly cultivated hills teeming with population rise in a verdant amphitheatre reminding one of the Bay of Naples, while a village resembling Sorrento

juts out on a promontory at the other end of the bay. A zigzag carriage-road has been constructed from Ghazir to the beach, though it is difficult to see for what purpose, as no wheeled vehicle, as yet, can approach either end of it. We were very glad to find a mark of civilisation affording such a contrast to the paths over which we had been recently scrambling; and still more pleased to be galloping over the hard sea-beach, halting only at a too tempting spot to take a plunge into the waves. We were now on the highroad from Tripoli to Beyrout, and in a couple of hours after leaving Ghazir reached Nahr-el-Kelb. I was hereon familiar ground, but I was glad of the opportunity of visiting it again. The river, which we had already seen at the wonderful springs which form its source, here forces its way through a picturesque ravine; and high up on the face of the cliff is an old aqueduct, its arches buried in creepers, mosses, and damp vegetation, while the river itself is spanned by a picturesque bridge; and the road, after crossing it, is hewn out of the rock, and overhangs the sea as it winds its way round the projecting promontory. Near the bridge there is an Arabic inscription on a large slab of rock, announcing that it was restored by Sultan Selim I. (son of Bajasid II.), the conqueror of Syria, in 1520. There is also, not far distant, on the other side of the stream, a Latin inscription cut in the rock, informing us that the pass was hewn by the Emperor Marcus Aurelius.

Here, too, are those nine different rock-carved sculptures which have furnished a fruitful theme of speculation to antiquarians; but there can be little doubt that they record the progress of conquering armies.

Three have been recognised as Egyptian, and six as Assyrian.

Sir H. Layard regards the Assyrian sculptures as the work of Sennacherib, whose name he has deciphered in the nearly obliterated inscriptions. Not being an antiquarian, I was only able, with positive certainty, to recognise two, which, however, possessed a special interest of their own. One was of comparatively recent date; but owing to the hardness of the rock, the artist had failed to carve the first letter with any distinctness. The remaining characters—"m i t h"—were, however, perfectly decipherable, and left no doubt in my mind as to the meaning and origin of the inscription. The other, which had been engraved apparently under an impulse similar to the English one, was in French; and its date—1860—was clearly defined. It was deeply cut on a slab, upon part of which was still traceable the figure of an Assyrian king, with a curly beard, in a long robe, with the Kidaris cap on his head. The left hand, placed against the breast, is holding a sceptre, while with the right he is apparently in the act of presenting something. The remainder of this tablet was covered with cuneiform characters, recording the conquest of Cyprus by the Assyrians, and with a still more important inscription recounting the triumphs of the French army in Syria under General de Hautpol. In consequence of the length and depth of this latter inscription, and the somewhat submissive attitude of the Assyrian king, who looks as if he was offering something to the French general, this part of the tablet presents a much fresher and more imposing appearance than the engraved records either of Sennacherib or of Smith.

A POOR DEVIL.

I.

"No, I never played Romeo; Mercutio was my part. I was always at my best where a certain humour or mockery was required—a something sardonic, a knowledge of the world. I played the lover, too, in my day, and with some success—on the stage, on the stage, of course—ha, ha!—not without success." Here the old gentleman pushed out his chest and inhaled the fragrance of his glass. Tom Bolivar winked as if he would call the attention of the company to the consummate art with which he had drawn out the old gentleman. To me it seemed that this task was as easy as to draw the cork of a soda-water bottle in the sun; and furthermore, that if any power had drawn the old gentleman out, it was whisky. He certainly paid more attention to the whisky than to the rest of the company. He was very sociable, and liked to have friends about him; but he always seemed to me to take us collectively, and barely to recognise individuals. I suspect that he was very shy in his youth. Even at this time he was very silent until the labours of the day were done and he had had a glass or two. When he did begin to speak, he was apt to speak a good deal; but he seemed to address himself to his tumbler, and we might listen if we chose. I always chose. I was a young man still, and a shy man—probably the shyest man in that festive club. Therefore I was glad when the old gentleman began to talk, for I could listen as well as anybody—probably better than any other member, for most of us were wits. Sometimes I fancied that the old gentleman looked at me out of

the corner of his eye, that he came nearer to talking to me than to the others. I was almost sure that we understood each other a little—that there was an uneasy fluttering sympathy between us. I used to suspect that some day, or rather some night, he would ask me to lend him money. Luckily I had not got any. I had often given him cigars. He offered me a pinch of snuff once rather shakily. I did not take it, because I don't like snuff. He was not offended; indeed I am not sure that he meant to offer it to me: perhaps he was only pushing the box about; he had a trick of pushing things about on the table. If he was naturally shy he must have suffered much, for he was an actor all his life, and had been thrown with all sorts of people. He had had some good engagements, but, if Tom Bolivar were right, they were not due to his own merits. Tom always declared that he never could act. The old gentleman thought that he not only had been, but was still, an uncommonly good actor. I am no judge of acting.

"No," continued the old gentleman after a pause, "oddly enough I never did play Romeo—and I daresay that I never shall." Here Tom laughed; and the old gentleman flushed a little as he said, "I have a good leg still."

"There's no deficiency at that end," remarked Tom to his neighbour, in that hoarse tone which he always means for a whisper. It was held in the club that the old gentleman was deaf: I hoped that he was. He was silent for a while; but when the waiter unbidden had brought a

fresh tumbler, the stream began to flow again.

"Did you ever see my poor dear wife's Juliet?" He appeared to ask the question of the whisky, and he certainly expected no answer, for he continued without a pause; "She was the best Juliet I ever saw;" "there was a romance, a something poetical if I may say so. One does not see such acting nowadays." Tom winked at us furiously, as if we did not all know as well as he that, when the old gentleman began to talk about his late wife, he was likely to talk about her at some length. I sometimes think that Tom was meant for a showman. Tom had often pointed out to us that it was strange in the old gentleman to be so fond of this subject of conversation, because the deceased lady had been very eccentric in her conduct, and more monotonous on the stage than off it. Now, when the old gentleman paused in his praises of this lady, Tom with a very sly look asked if he *never* played Romeo to her Juliet.

"Never," said the old gentleman, and after that he became silent. He went away early; and then somebody raised the question whether Tom had not hurt his feelings. Tom was vastly indignant, and maintained that it was impossible that the old gentleman could have understood his innuendo. Tom regards himself as a master of delicate innuendo, and thinks that there are few people of intellect fine enough to understand his allusions. On this occasion he got rather warm, and hinted that we were unworthy of subtle humour. He spoke most disrespectfully of the old gentleman, and declared that no hint was plain enough for his comprehension. "Hurt his feelings!" cried Tom, scornfully. "You might talk of him under his nose for an hour, and he would not find

out that you were not talking of Herr von Bismarck. He went about singing his wife's praises like a bird with one note; and all the time everybody knew——" and Tom finished his sentence with a toss of the head and a contemptuous shrug of his big shoulders. "And since his wife died, is the tedious old man any better? Doesn't he come here night after night and tell us of the points she made as Juliet or Beatrice, or Julia in the 'Hunchback.' And if we are spared the mother for one night, we have a double dose of her daughter. The old dotard bleats over that girl, as if——" Tom did not finish the sentence save with a contemptuous cloud of smoke; and I thought I might ask a question.

"He did teach her to act, didn't he?" I said.

"He never learned to act himself," said Tom, and he laughed as if he had launched an epigram. We all laughed; we were very kind to each other's jokes.

"Perhaps you admire the old gent's acting," Tom said to me. "If so, now's your chance: he plays Mephistopheles next week. He fancies himself in the part. He has done it a great many times in the provinces. You had better go and see him. I daresay there will be room in the theatre."

We all laughed again, but I did not laugh well, for I did not like having the talk directed at me.

"You know that he is at his best where a certain humour or mockery is required, a something weird and sardonic." We all laughed at the imitation of the old gentleman's voice and manner. We always laughed at Tom's imitations, which were wonderfully clever; and yet I never could see the resemblance of the old gentleman to Tom's imitation of him.

"And the girl does Margaret,"

said Tom, when we had done laughing; "there will be lots of people to go and see her—always lots of shirt-fronts where she plays. We all know her great talents—a plump figure and an eye. She has the deuce of an eye." He looked very knowing, and so did most of us.

"I don't wish you to suppose

for a moment," began Tom again, "that I would say anything against the old gent. Nobody is fonder of the old gent than I am; and, by George! his trust in women would be beautiful if it weren't so damned idiotic."

Then we all declared, or muttered, or asserted by a nod, that we were fond of the old gentleman.

II.

I have said that I was a young man ten years ago, when that festive club was in full swing, and the old gentleman came there every night after the theatre. I went very often to the play at that time; but I doubt if I should have gone to a revival of an old stage version of Goethe's 'Faust,' had I not been curious to see the old gentleman as Mephistopheles. I was young then, and was pleased by the knowledge that the actor playing before me was my personal friend. I felt that I enjoyed a certain superiority over the other young men, who did not know Mephistopheles at home. However, on the night on which I went to see the old gentleman act, there was at least one young man over whom I could claim no superiority. Unluckily he sat in the next stall, and made me feel uncouth. And yet there was nothing remarkable about him, except a self-possession almost insulting to sensitive people. Everything about him was exactly right. He made me feel as if my hair was rough and my dress-boots shapeless. Mephistopheles did not look powerful physically. When he stood still, he generally crossed his right foot over his left, placed his left hand on his hip, and turned his head over his right shoulder. There was something tremulous about the old

gentleman in this attitude, which diminished the impression of supernatural power in repose. Something tremulous also about the lips interfered with the clear-cut sardonic smile which they were meant to wear. Yet the old actor spoke firmly enough, and with good discretion; and the scene of his first meeting with Faust was well received. I fancied that he gave me a kindly glance out of the corner of his diabolical eye. Encouraged by this, and perhaps desiring to assert myself against my well-groomed neighbour in the stalls, I left my seat at the end of the first act, and went behind the scenes that I might pay my respects to Mephistopheles. His profession seemed to give him courage. Dressed in red and under his tall stiff plume he looked about him more freely. He shook me by the hand, and thanked me for my presence with a flourish of the arm, and a somewhat old-fashioned courtesy.

"I think you do not know my daughter," he said, with a slighter flourish of the other arm towards a young lady who stood a few yards off. I bowed shyly: she nodded, glanced at me for a moment, and then turned her eyes away again as if she were looking for something or somebody. Her glance was peculiar; she did not favour me with a second; so, while her father talked

to me of the part and the points, I was able to look at his daughter. Her body was beautifully proportioned, but the curves were a little too full, or seemed so to me. Her hair was plentiful and fair, but I fancied that even in the sunlight it would have but little warmth or brilliancy. The most striking features were the eyes, which were large, but very deeply set under dark brows and lashes. As I studied those eyes, and paid but slight attention to the critical remarks of the old gentleman, I became by degrees aware that the eyes from out of their strange shadow were looking at me. They were sulky, provoking, and amused. When I was sure that they were fixed upon me, and that my face betrayed my discovery, I expected that they would be turned aside. They continued to regard me with their half-sullen, half-humorous look, until I turned away rather sharply and interrupted the flow of the old gentleman's discourse. He stopped short, supposing that I had some luminous remark to make. I stammered out an apology, and was turning again to seek the front of the house, when I found myself face to face with my neighbour of the stalls. Though I had almost trodden on his shining boot, he regarded me with a face carefully divested of expression. Then he looked beyond me, and I saw that the girl greeted him with a curt nod.

"How d'ye do, my lord?" said the old gentleman, with his most nervous manner. He seemed to have lost his short-lived self-possession. "I hope you like the performance?" he added.

"Uncommon," said the young man briefly, but with more civility than I expected. "How are you?" he asked, as he stepped forward to the side of the girl.

She said nothing, but made a mocking face and rapped the hand, which he was holding out to her, with her fan.

There was something strange in her laugh, something which made me glance at her father. He was fidgety. There was a flush under his eyes, a flush too rosy for Mephistopheles, and the actor pulled a powder-puff from his wallet.

"We are going to begin, my lord," he said quickly.

"Then I must clear out," said the other, and I followed him back to the stalls.

It seemed to me that a change came over the old gentleman's acting. He was at once more natural and less self-possessed. I thought that he was determined to lose himself in his part—to be for a short time the very devil. There was more life in the creature; and yet I felt the effort—the purposed abandonment of himself. Anybody could see that he was more vigorous, that his favourite Mephistophelian attitude was less shaky; the pit became more attentive, the gallery more excited; there was some applause. At the sound of approval Mephistopheles pricked his ear like a war-horse. He was warmed by that unusual fire: he felt that he was acting with unwonted force. As he opened the jewel-case, and temptation's paste flashed brilliant in the stage gaslight, his mocking laughter rang with startling effect. Even my neighbour in the stalls gave a slight movement. What chance had the paper roses of a cotton-velvet Siebel against that magnificent display?

"Perchance," said Faustus, "she will choose the flowers?"

"Not if she be Evo's daughter," cried the old gentleman with almost hysterical passion.

There was a round of applause, and much laughter of jocular hus-

bands and fathers in the gallery ; but it struck me that the devil showed too much emotion. His mockery was surely too fierce. However, it is certain that the old gentleman had never before appeared so strong. He swept Faust into concealment behind a tree with an appearance of power, and he peered forth with terrible malignity to study the working of curiosity. Who could have brought those jewels ? When Margaret entering had found the casket, she raised her eyes. I thought that she was looking at me. The shadows under the dark brows were turned in my direction : I felt rather than saw the half-closed eyes in the shadows. In a moment I knew that I was mistaken—that I had been thrilled in vain ; and I laughed at my vanity. She was looking at my neighbour with a look both defiant and bored, which was quite out of keeping with the character which she played. When that sensible woman Martha found the girl with diamonds in her ears, and discerned the situation in an instant, Margaret betrayed but little astonishment.

" 'Tis a present from a lover—perhaps from a rich lord who has fallen in love with you," cried the fat little housewife. "A lover ! O heavens !" said the girl, and made a motion, which lacked impulse, as if she would take the jewels from her ears. Indeed this was a phlegmatic Gretchen. I turned my eyes from her to her father, who was sneaking from the stage. The old gentleman had some elaborate stage business here, which occupied much time. He moved from covert to covert, and paused in divers attitudes that he might watch the working of the charm. Now he seemed to be doing the business mechanically. His unusual force had deserted him. His

elaborate progress was in slightly wavy lines. His expression was peculiar. Never before on the face of fiend was a look so pathetically human. I passed my hand over my eyes that I might trust my own impression. It was the face of a wan old ghost drawn backward by invisible forces into the shades—a ghost with dim longing eyes fixed on his dearest, who abode in the upper gaslight already forgetful of him. It seemed impossible that the whole house should not discover this unparalleled phenomenon—this impossible devil. I glanced at my next neighbour in the stalls : he was holding his opera-hat against his lips : it was harder than ever to read his expression. I was uncomfortable, as if I were at a double performance—as if two familiar dramas were interwoven in a nightmare. "Sure, 'tis the prince of Trebizond, who is travelling incognito," cried judicious Martha, and Margaret bit her under lip and frowned. She cared not a jot for the character nor the audience. At the end of the second act my neighbour again left his seat, but I did not follow him. I was at once listless and restless.

In the last act the old gentleman played splendidly. I could still detect in him unusual excitement ; but I fancied that he was aware of his excitement, and was using it for artistic ends. It filled the lines of his conception with abounding life : instead of a meagre sketch here was a glowing picture ; instead of a tremulous but careful player a vivid mocking devil. Within the vast cathedral, where Margaret tries to pray, stands the fiend in shadow, more and less than human, angelic and batlike. The old gentleman was positively appalling. "Close in upon her, spirits of darkness ; take your own." Then the demons are heard lowly chanting through

the heavenly music, and Margaret falls senseless. This swoon was admirably managed by the girl, who for the rest had played the part poorly enough. The remainder of the great story was disposed of with amazing speed. The butchery of Valentine, the madness of Margaret, rushed by to the throb of violins; and there was the old gentleman in the supreme moment. Baffled, he glared at his lost prey, but could still mock all things and

himself. "'Tis enough to make the very devil swear to be robbed of such a dainty." There was such scorn and spite in his words that I turned cold and shuddered. Even the audience were moved; and as the curtain fell there was loud and general applause. The old gentleman stepped out smirking and jaunty, and turned up his weary eyes with the conventional respect for the gallery.

III.

For a long time I saw nothing of the old gentleman. His name vanished from the advertisements of the theatre, where 'Faust' had been only a stop-gap. The winter season passed away, and spring was passing—the season in which the fancy of the young man turns so easily loveward. But to what love? In those days I had little to do, save to observe the tricks and oddities of my neighbours. I was an amateur of unconsidered gestures, a delicate discriminator of the tendencies and twists of noses. I was quick in the recognition of people even in a crowd. For such a student, there is no field so delightful as the Park. To the Park at noon in early summer flock lazily the fashionable, the beautiful, the eccentric. Suddenly, after a month of east wind the folk of London awoke with amazement to the fact that the chimney-cowls had been turned completely round. They rubbed their dull eyes, but could not rub out the marvel. With what creaking and groaning must those monotonous and depressing monsters, which had stared all one way until mankind had forgotten that there were four quarters of the heavens—with what jerking and metallic wailing must they have accomplished that momentous revolution un-

der the silent and astonished stars! Morning saw them turned towards the north-east; a soft air blew from the south-west, lipping of Africa, wafting swallows homeward, fragrant of violet banks; all colours were straightway deepened and softened; men forgot the sky's hard blue, infrequent amid hail-storms, and looked up gratefully at a soft, deep bright heaven, where little fleeces were a-drying after storm. They saw, too, with newly-awakened eyes that the horse-chestnuts and thorn-bushes were lightly clad in fresh raiment, and that the elms were touched with green. There is nothing more beautiful under heaven than the first green on smoke-begrimed London trees when the west wind is blowing. It is like the singing of Ophelia amid murders and murderous thoughts, or the smile of Victor Hugo for a child. But these are of those wayward fancies, against which I am warned by more rational persons. They belong to that idle period of my life in which I was no better than a fanciful observer of human quaintness, and before I obtained that post of Inspector of Infant Samplers, which I am assured will be the making of me. But enough of myself. I was but one of those who floated westward to the Park and felt the new

sweet wind caress my eyes. The day was delightful, and even the most elevated persons seemed pleased to see each other. Very exquisitely dressed men almost smiled as they nodded. As I looked up the Row, it seemed full of dark masses of cavalry, while hither and thither between the slow-moving stately squadrons flitted a light horseman, or a girl on a bright chestnut came bounding. All the chairs beside the way were filled, and before them a crowd were moving, pausing, staring. They were so busy looking at each other, and holding themselves for inspection; so occupied with recurring thoughts, one of the sit of her bonnet, another of the hanging of his coat-tails; so fearful of missing a celebrated personage or being missed by a desirable acquaintance; so eager to see the last new beauty,—that the sky need not have made haste to be so softly blue, nor the trees to put on their new livery. Yet nature fulfilled her modest task of breathing everywhere and through all shrivelled hearts bountiful peace and the stirring of vivid joy. As for me, I walked on air, pleased with the gay throng and with my observation of their manners and the little lines on passing faces. I was walking slowly when my eye was caught by a peculiar motion of a figure beside me. I was on the left of the Row, and close to the ponies of the beautiful Lady Manuel, who had stopped her little carriage that she might speak to Captain Milvane. I was respectfully interested in the droop of the lady's head, as she bent towards the gallant gentleman, when my eye was diverted by the movement, half jaunty, half nervous, of which I have spoken. I stopped, and instantly recognised the back of the old gentleman. The back was very tightly buttoned into a smart coat, and had a stiff, almost boarded, appearance about

the waist. The glossy hat above it was set a little on one side; the trousers showed a sharp line descending straight to the bright heel and eloquent of early days. It was a well-made-up and a prosperous back, a back which would increase the hopelessness of the unfortunate. As I was noting its characteristics, the glossy hat came off with a flourish. A handsome phaeton was passing quickly up the Park. I instantly recognised the driver, who was sitting up with an expression of profound indifference, and allowing his beasts to travel as they would. It was my neighbour of the playhouse. He seemed unconscious of the old gentleman's salute; but beyond him a bonnet was visible for a moment; I inferred that a woman had nodded. The old gentleman looked after the carriage as if he were not unwilling to advertise his connection with so irreproachable a vehicle. He had replaced his hat at an angle a little more jaunty; he patted his collar, touched his cravat with his fingertips, and swung round to continue his stroll. As he moved he caught sight of me. I was sure that he saw me, for the colour came with a suddenness most unusual in an old cheek, and there was an unnatural stiffness about the head and neck as he stared intently far away towards the Knightsbridge Barracks. I had moved towards him, but I stopped abruptly. It was clear that my study of the old gentleman was to be strictly confined to that smart but unsympathetic back, rigidly artistic, but lamentably deficient in human nature. I was hurt. I crossed the Row and inserted myself into the denser crowd on the other side. I had not moved far when, glancing across the green on my right, I saw the phaeton coming down by the Serpentine. The speed had sunk almost to a walk; the driver seemed

equally well pleased. An idle curiosity induced me to turn back, and I reached the end of the Row before the carriage. It was clear that the placid charioteer had no intention of stopping where some great ladies had pulled up their ponies by the way. He dropped his whip across his animals; they sprang forward, and as they sprang I saw for a moment the face of the lady. It was the face of the whilom Margaret, the daughter of the old

gentleman. I was tired, out of humour with the unrecognised loveliness of the day; I found that one of my boots hurt me; I remembered a stupid call which I was bound to make. I held up my stick to a hansom, got myself well into a corner for fear of draughts (after all, this early summer weather is treacherous—perhaps all weather is treacherous—perhaps all things are treacherous, and all people), and so went home.

IV.

For some years past the duties of that office which is to be the making of me, and which necessitate some travel, have taken up so much of my time that I have made little use of my power of nice observation. Noses have passed me unobserved. Perhaps for that reason the images of traits noted in my idle period remain no jot less clear in my memory. I often conjured up the figure of the old gentleman with his tricks of hand, his stiff but tremulous aversion of the head and eyes, the conflicting lines of his face. Of the man I saw nothing for years. I was busy with my new duties, went but little to any club, and never to the Park at a fashionable hour, lest I should be still writ in the list of the unemployed. I once asked Tom Bolivar if he knew anything of our common friend. Tom instantly became denunciatory but mysterious. He exploded into hot and angry words, which quickly descended into mutterings. I am never sure how much Tom knows. He seems to know everything—he seems never to admit the possibility of incomplete knowledge of anything—and yet at times I find myself doubting if he be anything better than a blatant and baffle-headed fellow. I could not tell how much he knew about

the old gentleman; if he knew anything about him, it was clearly something to his disadvantage.

Much occupied with the duties of my office, launched on so desirable a stream of the political irrigation-system, ambitious of further successes, I was slowly losing the habit of recalling the old gentleman to mind, when I saw him again. I shall see him no more. Only a few weeks have passed since our meeting. It was in the morning, for I had taken a holiday. I rarely indulge myself with a holiday; but it was a slack time with us, and the supply of samplers at the central office, where I was working at the moment, was unusually small. Let me confess my weakness; I treated myself to a walk in the Park. It was late in May; summer had stolen upon us, capricious, in short-lived beauty; fresh green was everywhere, and the grass where it was allowed to grow was rich and yellow with buttercups. After noon it was almost too hot; my pace fell to a crawl; my mind, relieved from the cares of office, began to resume its old habits; I noted little turns of the head, nervous laughs and coughs, tricks which a philosophical friend ascribes to our insular shyness. Tom Bolivar is not shy. While I was musing, he came and

seized me by the arm. I should have liked to shake myself free of him, but I have not enough strength of mind to hurt anybody's feelings. Tom is not nice in the Park. He is a little rough in dress and manner, rather loud of voice, and fond of being looked at. I suppose that he is a fine-looking fellow; he is certainly big. He is burly, and heavy for a young man; I suppose that he is young. He has a broad nose and a rough reddish skin, in which the colour is fixed, and suggestive of the regular but moderate consumption of alcohol; the bloom of youth has been succeeded by the blossom. People look at him askance, and he takes it for admiration. I do not like to walk with him in the Park.

"I say, look there!" cried Tom, with unnecessary noise, and grasping my arm as if it were a pint-pot—"look at that old blazer." I looked, and started. There was something familiar in the extraordinary figure. It was certainly extraordinary. There were a pair of Hessian boots, which were so old, and had been so rubbed and polished, that I should have thought them but polish and tassels if boots could stand without leather. Was it possible that vanity prompted the display of those shrunken limbs? As my eye passed upward I noted an old, old coat, which stirred faint memories of gentlemen with long whips in unsuccessful circuses. It was magnificently frogged, but obviously thin. It had been blue all over, but was now very white in parts. It was so tight that methought the poor old buttons were one and all frenzied in the struggle for existence; each life hung on a thread. Could it be that the cause of this display of the board-like form was vanity? The hat was not in harmony with the remainder of the costume. The garments were the garments of the

romantic Stranger of Kotzebue. The hat was the reckless, mysterious sombrero of the Mexican of Captain Mayne Reid. Redolent of the prairie was the handkerchief, loosely knotted about the white seamed throat. I looked earnestly at the face, but it was not familiar. "He does this every day," said Tom, shoving me towards this eccentric cavalier. "Did you ever see such a gay old guy?" Tom spoke in his hoarse whisper, which seems to have the effect of a telephone. I was uncomfortable, and pushed on without a second look. Yet I saw nothing else. The figure haunted me. I paid no attention to Tom's remarks on fashionable folk, nor even to his emphatic nudges. My memory was flitting from place to place, from epoch to epoch of my career. On a sudden it lit upon the old gentleman. Why should I think of him? This cavalier of the Park, for all his shrunken limbs, was evidently younger than that venerable artist. Moreover, nobody knew better than I that the old gentleman, off the boards and with no glass before him, was shy. I had long ago decided that the quality which lay beneath his many tricks and oddities—the soil from which they drew their vitality—was shyness. It was in the highest degree improbable that a shy man would attire himself as if he ran a circus in the boundless prairie, and, thus conspicuous, would tread the Park at its most fashionable hour. The idea was intolerable. I whistled it down the wind, and turned my attention to the minuter peculiarities of persons less highly coloured. I wished that I could whistle Tom Bolivar down the wind: it would have required a May hurricane. With Tom still dragging at my arm I turned, and again encountered the Mexican stranger. As I met him, he glanced at me

from the corner of his eye, and quickly averted his head. I knew the movement: my vague fancies leapt together and were certainty: it was the old gentleman. It was impossible, but true. Tom gave a hoarse laugh to show his appreciation of the unusual costume. I shook him off and started in pursuit of my friend. Tom said "Holloa!" and followed me. Pushing somewhat roughly through the sauntering crowd I came to the side of the old gentleman. The old colour came up into the thin lined cheek, but with a strange difference; it was no wonder that he looked younger, for he was elaborately made up. I took his arm; as I did so, I heard a kind of roar of astonishment behind me. I turned my head and saw Tom Bolivar standing open-mouthed. For a moment he stood like a beast in a slaughter-house, then he fled; I was rid of Tom. The arm which I took was trembling; the colour had ebbed from the cheek and left it ghastly, for all its decoration. The old gentleman muttered something, and interpreting his speech to suit my wishes, I hurried him out of the crowd. There were people all about us staring: a cad laughed; a policeman made a witty remark: afterwards I remembered these trifles. At the time I thought of nothing but the old gentleman, who seemed about to faint. I helped him into a cab, and followed him, though he made a feeble gesture of expostulation. I asked for his address. He fumbled in his old coat, and with a poor imitation of his ancient flourish gave me a card grown dirty and limp about the corners; on it was written in pencil an address: his dwelling was in the dreariest street in Soho. He had a bedroom in a mean house—a bedroom to the corners of which the brush of the slattern paid angel visits; whence, when the faded stained blind had

gone up crooked, one could discern a smudged back-window, two irregular chimney-pots, some defective slates, probably a cat. In his room in Soho I saw the last of the old gentleman. He liked my visits: I used to send out for a moderate supply of whisky. Under our influence he made a few remarks. He said that he could not understand why managers had suddenly ceased to offer him engagements. "Soon after my daughter left me," he said, "I fell out of employment. I have never been able to understand the reason. I feel that I have it in me now to act as well as ever." He had just finished his first tumbler. On another occasion he begged me not to suppose that his daughter had been unkind. I asked if she had not been able to help him. He pushed his tremulous right hand into the breast of his coat, and in an attitude of pride said, "Under the circumstances, I did not feel that I could accept pecuniary assistance." Then his hand came out from his chest; he seemed to shrink in his chair; he bowed his head almost to his knees, and I heard him muttering. "God forgive me!" he said (I felt that he had forgotten my presence); "I could not take her money. I tried—God forgive me!—but I couldn't."

When I last visited him, he was wandering a little; he was nervous and fidgety. He muttered fragments of prayers and plays, and broke off again and again to ask if it were not time to go to the Park. "I mustn't miss the Park," he said; "everybody'll be there—the public—I can't do without the public." Afterwards he began to prattle as if he were talking to a child. I could not hear much; but at last he spoke out very clearly and said, "Baby must clap her hands to pretty mamma when the big curtain goes up." After that he said nothing. He would not touch his whisky; and I knew that the end was near.

AMONG THE AFFGHANS.

A SURVEYOR'S NARRATIVE.

I.

IN a recent number* I gave an account of the principal Pathan tribes who dwell beyond the north-western border of India, and with whom our troops have recently come into contact. I now venture to offer some details regarding the clans who live farther into the interior, especially those whose country lies in close proximity to the line of advance of our Khyber column. In addition to the Afreedees, this column of our troops, in the late Affghan war, came in contact with three other large tribes of Pathans—Mohmunds, Shinwarees, and Khugianees. Besides these, between Gandamak and Cabul there was only one more powerful tribe which could have opposed our further progress—the Ghilzais.

Between the Cabul wars of 1839-1842 and the late one, our Government had no dealings with any of these but the Mohmunds, who border on British territory. This tribe was next only in importance to the Afreedees on our north-west frontier; and during the first weeks of the advance of our troops, much depended on the action the Mohmunds were likely to take—for they inhabit the northern slopes of the Tartara range, which shuts in the Khyber on the north. They occupy Dakka and its neighbourhood, and their country lay along the right flank of our line of march from Jamrud to Chardeh in the Jellalabad valley, some miles beyond Bussawal—that is, they flank the right of the main road for the first five marches from Jamrud. Further, through their country run

no less than three alternative *ka-fila* (caravan) routes from Jellalabad to Peshawar, either of which might have been utilised by an energetic Affghan general to cramp our advance by throwing a force into the Peshawar valley, ten or twenty miles north of Jamrud, so soon as our main body was sufficiently advanced in the Khyber—more especially by using the Gandao route, as we shall show further on. Unlike the Afreedees or any other Pathan tribe, the Mohmunds long acknowledged the supremacy of one chief—the Khan or Nawab of the village of Lalpoorah, which is on the left bank of the Cabul river, about thirty miles from Michni and just opposite the fort of Dakka. This chief acknowledged the suzerainty of the Ameer of Cabul; and had the invasion occurred ten years sooner, it is almost certain that we would have had the entire tribe opposed to us—threatening seriously our long, narrow line of communications.

But since 1863 our political relations with the tribe have gradually altered its original organisation and divided the interests of its several sections. Of these there are four principal ones: the Tarakzai, inhabiting the hills in the neighbourhood of Fort Michni, and the strip of country lying between the Khyber Pass and the Cabul river, including the small but rich valley of Shilman; the Alimzai, possessing the country north of the Tarakzai, including the large fertile valley of Gandao, the lesser one of Pandiali, and a farther one, with the southern

* See *Maga* for May 1879—Art. "The Pathans of the North-West Frontier of India."

slopes of a mountain-range known as Ilazai (entered on former maps as Cabul Sappar), dividing the Mohmund country from Bajour, inhabited by a section of the great Eusufzai tribe; the Baizai, lying west of the Tarakzai, and occupying all the country north of the Cabul river as far as Gooshta and Chardeh; and the Khwaizai, lying west of the Alimzai, with one strip of hills running on to the Cabul river itself. The two first, from their position on our border, have for several years come more and more under the influence of the British officials in Peshawar. The Baizai acknowledge unquestioned the supremacy of the Khan of Lalpoorah. The Khwaizai sometimes do the same—more often consider themselves quite independent, both of the Ameer and the British.

The Khan of Lalpoorah farms the revenue of several villages lying on either bank of the Cabul river north of Dakka, paying the Ameer a lump sum of about one-fourth of the full amount collected. In exchange for this he is permitted to govern the Mohmunds as he pleases, and is allowed to keep up a small force of infantry and cavalry, from which he is bound to supply a contingent to the Ameer in time of war, in addition to a body of militia or levies, generally raised among the more independent section of the tribe. He still claims a supremacy over the whole of the Mohmunds, but these dispute his right whenever possible. When he is otherwise engaged, he leaves the various sections to themselves; but so soon as he finds himself able to assert his right, or to interfere, he compels submission in peculiarly oriental style. Watching his opportunity when the smaller sections in any of the valleys are at feud amongst themselves, he secures an invitation

as arbitrator; proceeds to the valley with as many troops as he can muster, and settling down as a *guest* in some central position, levies contributions of food and money all round, till his now loyal subjects are tired of his exactions, pay up arrears of revenue, swear fealty, and escort him back to his home with every token of respect and affection. Despite these little disagreements, however, the various sections never completely denied the right of supremacy till the instalment of Mahmood Shah Khan, the present ruler, by the orders of the late Ameer, in place of Nowroz Khan, the hereditary chief, who fell into disgrace at the same time as Yakooob Khan, to whose mother he was related.

In the early days following the annexation of the Punjab, the Mohmunds made their presence disagreeably felt on the border, and were so very troublesome that it was considered necessary, for the protection of the Doaba—the low country lying between the Swat and Cabul rivers after their entrance into the plains—to erect no less than three forts and two intermediate police-posts.

The forts are,—Michni, at the *débouchement* into the Peshawar valley of the Cabul river; Abazai, holding a similar position on the Swat river; and Shubkudr, between them. Each of these forts consists of high earthen walls and bastions, with surrounding ditch, and each is garrisoned by a few companies of native infantry and a troop of cavalry, and boasts a couple of cannon, but no artillerymen. A British officer now commands at each post. The garrisons are drawn from the regular troops in Peshawar, and are under the orders of the brigadier commanding that station. In this respect these forts and Forts Mackeson and Jamrud differ from all

others along the frontier, which are garrisoned by detachments from the Punjab Frontier Force, which is under the orders of the lieutenant-governor of the Punjab, and not those of the commander-in-chief in India.

While these forts were yet building, the Mohmunds did their utmost to annoy the workmen, and near Michni erected a high tower on a knoll about two miles off in defiance. Two young British officers took it into their heads to ride round this tower one evening; but as they were returning a volley was fired into them, and one killed. Troops were sent out, who destroyed the tower; but it was again and again rebuilt, and as often destroyed, before the Mohmunds became more peaceful. At that time the supremacy of the Khan of Lalpoorah was unquestioned; and our Government thought that the surest way of putting a stop to these annoyances would be to send a force to burn Lalpoorah itself. Had this been done, it is quite possible that the sudden destruction of a village so far within the hills would have terrified the Mohmunds; but the slightest failure would have made matters much worse.

So little was then known of the country that it appears to have been considered practicable to march troops, with guns, to Lalpoorah and back in three days, up the banks of the Cabul river. The only route along the banks is a narrow track, which in places is just practicable for experienced climbers! Luckily, Sir Colin Campbell (Lord Clyde), the brigadier in Peshawar, declined to attempt the march with a force less than ten thousand men,—and the project dropped. And it was just as well that it did; for we would have had not only Mohmunds, but all their neighbours, probably twenty to thirty thousand men, if not to

oppose the advance, certainly to harass, or to entirely cut off the return of the troops through a most difficult unknown country.

Except during the Mutiny year '57, and those immediately succeeding it, when all the excitable youth of the border were enrolled under the British flag, and were doing good service in the North-West Provinces, raiding of villages and harassing of police-posts continued at intervals till 1863. During the winter of that year, when Sir Neville Chamberlain, with 5000 men, found himself compelled to stand at bay in the Umbeyla Pass against the only formidable combination of the tribes there has yet been on the border, the Mohmunds invaded the low country in great strength, and endeavoured to besiege the forts of Michni and Shubkudr. A portion of the reinforcements marching to Umbeyla were diverted to these forts, and the Mohmunds were driven with loss into their hills again, the loss on our side being little more than that of Lieutenant Bishop, who was shot while leading a cavalry charge over rough ground. The then Commissioner of Peshawar, Major James, next took matters in hand. His personal influence on the border was very great. He had just returned from furlough, and hurrying up to Umbeyla, sent for several of the border chiefs opposed to us with whom he was personally acquainted, and on their arrival broke up this most powerful confederacy by a little ruse that could not have succeeded in any less suspicious or more advanced state of society. Summoning the chiefs individually into his tent, he detained each a few minutes without exchanging a word beyond the most commonplace civilities. Each was separately dismissed, and conducted out of camp without being permitted

to exchange notes with his compatriots. Each concluded the others had entered into separate arrangements with the Commissioner, while he alone was left in the dark. Before twenty-four hours, more than 30,000 out of the 40,000 Pathans had started off, every man to his own home!

Major James next turned his attention to the Mohmunda. Summoning the chiefs of the Tarakzai and Alimzai to meet him, he inquired into their wants; and finally entered into an agreement with them, by which a long narrow strip of country lying between the frontier forts and roads and the base of hills, which had hitherto lain waste, was made over to them, which they were to cultivate and possess free of tax so long as they behaved themselves. From that time till last winter no tribe was more amenable to reason. Only one *contretemps* occurred, the murder of Major Macdonald, commandant of Fort Michni, by a young Mohmund of good family, in a fit of temper, or in revenge for some fancied insult. The murderer fled to Lalpoorah, and Nowroz Khan, the then chief, refused or was unable to surrender him. Representations on the subject appear to have been made to Ameer Shere Ali, but without effect; and Nowroz continued in power till the imprisonment of Yakoob Khan, when, having refused to obey a summons to Cabul, the Ameer sent a body of troops to Lalpoorah, and driving Nowroz out of that place, put Mahmood Shah Khan in his place. As we were at peace with Shere Ali, we could not well give Nowroz refuge, especially as the Ameer pretended that one of the main reasons for his deposition was his refusal to seize and surrender Major Macdonald's murderer.

Nowroz fled to Gandao, and was

well received by the Alimzai, who seem from that time to have thrown off their allegiance both to the Khan of Lalpoorah and the Ameer of Cabul. Nowroz remained there till his death. So soon as the return of the Chamberlain Mission caused the final breach between the Ameer and the British, the sons of Nowroz came into Peshawar and tendered their submission to the British authorities. They were hospitably entertained; and of course their rival, Mahmood Shah Khan, threw in his lot with the Ameer, and sent a strong contingent to aid in the defence of Ali Musjid. This Mohmund contingent was placed on the Rotas heights, a ridge about 5000 feet in elevation, overlooking and commanding the fort of Ali Musjid and the "Shadi Bagiar" entrance of the Khyber Pass, along which winds the Mackeson road,—up that taken by the main portion of Sir Samuel Browne's column in the advance to Ali Musjid on 21st November last. Till within three days of that advance, the Mohmund watch-fires and tents could be distinctly seen from Jamrud. Then suddenly Mahmood Shah Khan changed front, probably alarmed by the formidable appearance of the huge British camp covering the whole country from Jamrud to Peshawar. The Mohmund contingent deserted Rotas and retired towards Shilman and Lalpoorah. The formidable right flank of the enemy's position was thus left unguarded; and the turning flank-march made by the brigades of Generals Tytler and M'Pherson was entirely unopposed, though some miles of it was made in single file, first along the steep mountain-slopes, and then down as rugged and formidable a gorge as it is possible to conceive, with precipitous crags rising 3000 feet above the narrow rocky water-course, down which the

troops filed without hearing a shot fired. This flank move, by placing two infantry regiments in the Khyber Pass two miles in rear of the enemy's position on their main line of retreat, in the first day of the attack, hastened the evacuation of the fort—which evacuation became a hurried panic-stricken flight before the morning of the 22d, when twenty-four pieces of cannon, and all tents, magazines, and stores, fell into the hands of the victors. It was no pleasant position held by Colonel Jenkins with the Guide Corps and 1st Sikhs—a portion of General Tytler's brigade—that night: Ali Musjid untaken; a deep gorge three miles long in his rear; the heights of Rotas to the left, greatly weakened by the defection of the Mohmunds, but not entirely evacuated by the enemy—these Mohmunds, perched like hawks on the heights to our right, closely watching the engagement round Ali Musjid, ready to pounce down on the two isolated regiments if the day went against us there; the Afreedees of the hostile party, under Abdoolla Noor, and others of less note, and probably not a few of Khwass Khan's "friendly" ones, perched in a similar position, with a like object, above the rocky scarps facing us on the south side of the pass—the only support at hand being H.M.'s 17th Regiment, some three miles to our rear in a commanding position, and General M'Pherson's brigade a few miles farther off, but neither near enough to afford ready help in any sudden night-attack. Ere sundown, however, it became evident that the garrison of Ali Musjid would not hold out. The cavalry dashed past under a smart fire so early as four in the evening—it was the beginning of the end. Ere daylight the entire army was in disorganised flight.

Whatever his motives, Mahmood Shah Khan, in thus deserting the Ameer at the critical moment, greatly aided us. His overtures of submission, made as soon as we advanced, were therefore entertained by Major Cavagnari, and he was left unmolested at Lalpoorah throughout the campaign. His offers of assistance were also accepted, and soon put to the test.

The road through the Khyber was at this time far from being all that could be desired. Round the base of the hill on which stood the Fort Ali Musjid, and for two miles up, the road ran along the bed of the main stream, a narrow rocky gorge. At the best of times, loaded camels could only pass each other here with great difficulty; consequently, during the first weeks after the advance, blocks in traffic were frequent. Had the winter rains been as heavy as usual, the increase of water would have rendered it almost impracticable for hours, or even days. From Lundi Kotal too, at the west end of the Khyber, the road to the farther base of the hills was narrow and winding for three miles, and for three more ran between low grass-covered hills intersected by ravines, in which bands of marauders daily took up a position and worried the convoys. For these and other reasons, it was considered advisable to examine the Michni *kafila* routes, which pass through Mohmund country north of the Khyber, with the object of ascertaining their fitness or otherwise to be adopted as alternative routes for the conveyance of stores to and from the front. Accordingly, a reconnoitring party with a small escort accompanied by Mahmood Shah Khan, started to examine the Hyder Khan route, which crossed the Cabul river about half-way between Michni and Dakka, and entered the Pesh-

war valley after crossing intervening hills rising to an elevation of 3500 feet.

The party rode up the rocky path, styled the high road, into the Shilman valley, examined the route as far as the river, and returning to a village in Shilman, halted there for the night. Houses were placed at the disposal of officers and men, and all were hospitably entertained. The dinner of good stewed mutton, &c., was not to be despised, though the want of knives and forks was somewhat unpleasant.

As the inhabitants expressed a strong wish for the adoption of one or other of the roads through the Mohmund country by the British, it was determined to have a survey made of each of them if possible. As the reasons given were good, no opposition was anticipated. I, as surveyor, with an escort of one company of native infantry, was deputed for the work. "In the first place," said the Mohmunds, "we will be well paid for the ground over which the road will pass; we will make a lot of money by working on it as labourers; we will find a nearer market than Peshawar for our wood, grass, fowls, sheep, &c.; and lastly, when you return to India, we will have more *kafilas* using it than we have ever had hitherto." We were soon at work amongst them. A chief for whom we had on a previous occasion done a favour, joined us and soon made matters easy. But a *contretemps* might have occurred on the very first day of the trip.

On a knoll, from which a fine view of surrounding country could be obtained, stood a tower, the only path to which passed through a small village. As we approached, a knot of Pathans stood in the way, and objected to our further progress, when the following conversation

occurred: luckily we understood the language, a great advantage.

Surveyor. "What objection have you to make to my going to that particular tower, when you make no objection to my passing through your country?"

Pathan. "Our houses lie in the way, and we do not wish you to go into our houses."

Surveyor. "My work is on your hills, not in your houses, and from that tower I should obtain a fine view."

Pathan. "Yes, and a good view into our houses also!"

Here a new speaker, who had spent some time in British territory, came forward and said: "You see, Sahib, their *Mem Sahibs* (ladies) are in the houses." "But," said the surveyor, "if I wanted to look at *Mem Sahibs* I would have stayed in India: have we not enough there?" "Yes," he replied, "but they are not here." A general laugh followed this, and it being unanswerable, the surveyor turned back. But the feeling had changed; he was now invited to go on, and did so among a chattering mob, taking great care, of course, not to look round when female voices and giggling reached his ear. This jealous feeling is characteristic of all Affghans, and till the last winter the Pathan looked upon the Englishman as a dangerous enemy to domestic peace. When first the troops invaded Affghanistan, the sight of a British escort was the signal for every woman and child to fly to the nearest rocks; but ere two months had passed, the feeling had so completely changed, that it was found difficult at times to turn the women and children away from the vicinity of towers doomed to destruction. They remained fearlessly in the villages round which our troops encamped, and brought commodities for sale into the camps with perfect

confidence. More than one chief remarked to the present writer, during his wanderings amongst them, that never before had they heard or read of an army so gentle and so courteous to enemies and friends alike.

Two or three trips through the country were necessary before all required was finished; and as these experiences may help to elucidate the peculiar characteristics of the tribes which have lately come under British sway, we may be excused for dwelling on them.

A second trip had been arranged for, and in due time we again started, accompanied by a Mr Sinclair, assistant-commissioner, since dead. We were escorted by a company of native infantry, as on the former trip. This escort would not have been sufficient if the trips had not been invited by the inhabitants: these indeed would perhaps have preferred having the Englishmen without other escort than their own clansmen; but, as was proved afterwards, although the great bulk of the tribe might desire the presence of their guests, they are at times powerless to prevent sudden attacks by parties of fanatics or outlaws. The country through which we passed is drained by the Cabul river. This river, taking its rise beyond the city of Cabul, drains the valley in which that city lies, and passing along the base of the group of hills which lie between Jellalabad and Cabul—through which runs the Jugdulluk Pass—enters the Jellalabad valley after receiving the waters of the Surkhab, which drains a portion of the Safed-Koh; and the Alingar, Alishang, and Komar rivers, which drain a portion of the southern slopes of the Hindoo Koosh. Between Jellalabad and Dakka its bed is often over a mile in breadth, pass-

ing sometimes between low lands covered with rice-fields and dotted with villages, at others through rocky gorges at the bases of low isolated hills. After passing Dakka and Lalpoorah about four miles, it enters the group of hills lying round the Khyber, and taking a wide semicircular sweep, broken at intervals by short rectangular windings, it enters the Peshawar valley at Michni. Its channel is here, at times, hemmed in between precipitous rocks, and narrowed to a breadth of 60 or 70 yards. In places huge blocks of granite jut forward into the stream, against which the water is hurled with great violence during the months that it is swollen by the melting of the snows in the higher hills. At the sudden turnings the high-water mark is often 100 feet above the ordinary level. During the winter, again, it falls so low that the points of large rocks in its bed are exposed, and round them eddies are formed; while other points, just hidden below the surface, are still more dangerous. It is therefore quite unfitted for boats of any kind. During the intermediate stage between high and low water, goods are indeed brought down on timber rafts; but this can never supersede camel traffic between Dakka and Michni for at least nine months of each year. There is, however, a large amount of timber brought down at all seasons. Logs of deodar and pine, about 20 to 30 feet in length, are made up into rafts, and floated down. On them sit four to six men, each being provided with a long pole to keep the raft off the rocks, and also with a *shinaz* (inflated cow, goat, or sheep skin). When, despite the long poles, it becomes evident that the raft must strike, every man prepares his *shinaz*; and a few moments before the blow comes, they hug these

skins, and throw themselves fearlessly into the water. Buoyed up, they fly down-stream till they near some quieter portion of the river : here they wait on the banks till the timbers reach them ; these they catch and rebind, and are off again.

Every year, however, several men are lost in this perilous game. Nor is this the only danger. It has been mentioned above that the Khwaizais have a strip of country running on to the bank here, at a point where the river is narrow ; and hemmed in between high banks are situated two of their villages—Shinpok and Palosi. Every raft must pay a fee before passing these, or run the gauntlet of a fire from the ever-ready sharpshooters on either side. The exactions thus levied on traders became at one time so heavy that the trade began to diminish largely. Then the late Ameer entered into an arrangement with the Khwaizais, by which it was agreed that, for a yearly subsidy of 10,000 Rs., the Khwaizais should undertake to protect all traffic between Dakka and the Tarakzai country, and levy no fees. This 10,000 Rs. was to be paid them by the Khan of Lal-poorah, who was to deduct it from the amount yearly paid by him to the Ameer. The non-fulfilment of this contract during the unsettled times of our advance was the chief cause of the trouble given us by the Khwaizai Mohmunds during the last months of the occupation.

When first the survey party entered Shilman, however, all was still quiet. We pushed along, unmolested and even assisted by the inhabitants, across the series of rugged mountain-slopes falling abruptly from the Tartara range to the river, and reached Shilman in safety.

Here we were joined by certain of the Tarakzai chiefs, who begged

of us to go through their country to Michni, and were positive that we would recommend a certain route called the Shinilo, along which no Sahibs had yet travelled, to the notice of the authorities. The only difficulty was that of crossing our guard, and the body of mules carrying several days' rations, over the river. The chiefs affirmed that there was not the slightest necessity for their presence with us, as their adherents would hold the passes ahead.

After some deliberation we agreed to the proposal, and sending off the escort to Dakka, we started *via* Shinilo for Michni, having only the Khan's men, and three or four of our own attendants carrying the survey instruments, with us. In due time we reached the river-bank ; and then, for the first time, were informed that there was no boat ready, as the last one had been destroyed by a flood, and a new one was not finished. Nor had any other arrangement for our crossing been made. However, just then some descried a small raft coming down-stream, and after a long talk, we secured it for the passage. It could only hold three men besides the crew ; so the two of us, and one man carrying the Khan's arms, got in it. The Khan and four or five of his men stripped and threw themselves on *shinaz* into the water, and we were soon ferried across. Luckily, we had taken our rifle and the plane-table with us. We now sent the raft back for our attendants ; but the raftsmen, as soon as they were across, said that it was impossible to recross against the strong current, and immediately broke up the raft. So our attendants had to go back, and we were thus left with the young Khan and six of his attendants. And just then, far above us, men were seen taking up

their position on the hills commanding the pass. The Khan now began to look anxious, and asked if the rifle was loaded. He also ordered six fishermen, who had been lazily lounging about half naked, to get their arms and be ready to go with us. We asked how it was he was so anxious now, when he had been so confident before. "Oh, then I had all our followers, who have been left on the off-bank; now we have only twelve men, and invite attack." However, there was no help for it. He and his men looked to their priming, and we were ready to start. But here a fresh difficulty arose: who was to carry the plane-table? His men simply refused to demean themselves by doing so; and with rifle, cartridges, rations, &c., we had about enough already. However, as a last resort, I was about to pick it up myself, when two more men appeared on the scene and paid their respects to us, and on hearing the difficulty, volunteered for the duty. These were outlaws who had, some years previously, committed manslaughter under very extenuating circumstances, and had fled from justice. Tired of long exile they had applied for pardon, and now offered their services in the hope of obtaining good marks. Their offer was gladly accepted: we had never before been so gratified as now by the arrival of a couple of cut-throats. They took up the instruments, and away we started; but much valuable time had been lost. We had got about half-way up the opposite hill when a loud challenge came from above. In an instant we were all close behind rocks, rifles ready; but the challenge was truthfully replied to. "It is Jung Khan." Explanations followed, and we were soon under the escort of 80 men, who had just arrived under Jung's brother, after

a slight demonstration against a party of outlaws which had, about an hour before, occupied a defile through which our road lay. We now felt perfectly safe, and went gaily on, taking notes and surveying till nightfall, when we were still seven miles from our destination. There was no halting-place here, so we determined to push on, and to return at some future time to finish the missing link.

As we cleared the hills the chief's men dropped off, and at length the chief himself with the rest of his following asked permission to go to his home, which was near, as all were tired and hungry, and there was no danger ahead. So for the last two miles we had only our two criminal companions, but got in safely by 10 at night.

Mr Sinclair distributed *loongees* (cloths), &c., among the Khans, and all apparently went off satisfied. But ere the survey could be recommenced, the face of affairs had much altered. The Khwaizai had fruitlessly demanded the 10,000 Rs. annual subsidy, now overdue, from Mahmood Shah Khan, and vowed mischief. They resented the Tarakzai chiefs taking Sahibs along a route, in which it seems they considered themselves part proprietors, without their leave: some sections of the Alimzai did the same. The dispute was at its height when a Syud or Fakir from Peshawar suddenly made his appearance on the spot, and at once collecting round him as many outlaws, fanatics, and fiery young men as he could muster, began to preach war with the infidels, and used his spiritual authority to condemn the action of the Khans who had opened the *purdah* to the Sahibs.

It is astonishing how soon a man with the slightest pretence to sanctity, especially if accompanied with

a little originality and dash, can obtain a hold on the superstitious fancies of the Pathans. He is at times permitted to demand their obedience on points with which he has no personal concern. No religious mendicant vainly demands alms. A pretender will suddenly take up his abode under a large rock or tree near some village, stick up a flag, live in squalid filth, talk very sentimentally, give advice on every possible subject with the dogmatism of an oracle, and before six months pass he will be a recognised authority. While he lives he is provided with more than sufficient food for his wants, and when he dies his grave becomes a place of pilgrimage, and miracles are performed at his shrine. Each section of a tribe has its own sacred spot to which its members resort; while here and there are the famous miracle-working giant shrines, known as *Chalgazas*, or "forty-footers,"—the graves of the "giants there were in those days." One of these *Chalgazas*, the common resort of Hindoo and Moslem petitioners, flourishes in Peshawar, close to one of the main roads. This dead giant had the peculiar faculty of growing every now and again, and threatened before long to grow straight across the public road. But here the civil authorities stepped in, and advised him to do his enlargement underground if he must do it, and warned him that otherwise he would find his space curtailed. He has very obligingly followed this advice ever since.

There is a story told of our friends the Khyber Zakhakhels that is very probably true. It was long a sore point with them that, while every other section of the tribe had its particular shrine, no

Fakir had been obliging enough to die amongst them. They had been taunted about this by the others, till at last they determined to supply the deficiency. In Peshawar lived a Fakir of peculiar sanctity. A deputation from the Khyber waited on this saint, and earnestly invited him to pay them a visit. He granted the request, and on arrival was sumptuously entertained. After dinner he was informed of the vacancy in the Khyber saints' calendar, and of the determination of the tribe to be no longer without the means of having a heavenly agent to forward the prayers of their sonless ones. As his soul was going straight to bliss, and his body to be so highly honoured, he could not possibly have any objection to the arrangement. Any way, the sacrifice was made, and the desired sanctuary secured.*

To return to the Mohmunds. So soon as the Fakir there had collected a sufficiently large body of outlaws, &c., he marched with his following into the Tarakzai villages, demanded and obtained all the *loongees* presented by Mr Sinclair, and made a bonfire of them. So far successful, he became more imperious; but the Tarakzais threatened to invite the Sahib to send troops to seize him if he troubled them more; so he went off again to Gandao, vowing vengeance. Of course much of this did not transpire till afterwards. Everything seemed perfectly quiet when the survey party arrived on the scene. A native official of much border influence was deputed to accompany the party, and to make the necessary arrangements for its safe conduct through the hills. The Alimzai

* As miracles are performed at the shrine, the saint must have forgiven having been sent off at such notice.

and Tarakzai Khans were invited to Michni. The latter came in, and some of the former. Others wrote to say that they had no objection to the *compāss-wallah* going anywhere, but that they could not attend, as the demonstrations of the Fakir's party rendered their presence in their villages necessary as a check against his designs. They further advised that no halt should be made at night except in very strong defensible positions. Attacks in daylight no one expected. Accordingly, leaving our tents and baggage, with the main part of the escort, behind, we started, with twenty sepoy and a body of Tarakzais and some Alimzai Khans, for a village called Zankhai, about seven miles from Michni, intending to return to camp at night. By mid-day we had finished the sketch required, and had climbed a prominent peak, from which a splendid view of the Gandao valley was obtained. Seated on neighbouring knolls were small armed parties, with whom we entered into conversation, which was cordially carried on till some one noticed a strong body of men hurrying towards us from the valley below. Wishing to avoid a disturbance, we immediately began the descent, but had scarcely gone 100 yards down-hill when the parties with whom we had been conversing opened a pretty smart fire on us, or rather over us, for, as usual, no one was hit. Considering it unadvisable to begin a fight, we continued our retreat without returning their fire, and it soon ceased. Shortly after, we were on the road, and quietly moving campwards. The Tarakzai Khans having asked where we intended going next day, we broke through our usual custom and told them. They immediately asked permission to go and take up a position above the intended route, to prevent its being occupied by

any malcontents. This, after some hesitation, we allowed, and we never saw them again that day. Perhaps it was as well, for we could not tell friend from enemy. Some Alimzais remained with us the whole day; but though three of them were Syuda, they could not prevent what occurred. Scarcely had we proceeded homewards a mile, when we noticed bodies of armed men hurrying along a ridge to our left, and soon we were under a smart fire from every knoll and bush around us. A remonstrance against their conduct, when we were there with the permission of their chiefs, only elicited a volley, and loud yells of "Ali! Ali!" The sepoy now opened out in skirmishing order. A sudden sharp fire soon drove our enemies behind cover and taught them caution; but far from all supports, and unable to secure a good position, we were obliged for the next two hours to skirmish slowly back from bush to bush and rock to rock. The steadiness of the sepoy and the Sniders kept the enemy back, till we found ourselves obliged to descend a steep, stony, bare ridge. A heavy flank-fire had compelled us to keep on one side of the spur leading to this, and we were thus unaware that a body of the fanatics were hurrying on parallel to us within a few yards. As soon as they saw us crawling down the rocks, a wild "Allahi! Allah!" rang out, and in a moment after they dashed on us sword in hand. For the first few seconds all seemed lost; in a few more the fanatics had been driven back under cover, leaving some of their number on the ground. One sepoy had been killed and one wounded, both with sword-cuts. Almost immediately after a heavy fire was again opened on us, and we were obliged to continue our retreat. A corporal was now shot down, mortally

wounded. In endeavouring to carry him off a delay occurred, and here unfortunately the Sunya tripped and fell over the rocks. Again the "Ali! Ali!" rang out, and in a moment they were into us again. They were again driven back, but not before they had cut down the poor wounded Naick, who with his last breath was urging us to go on and leave him to his fate. His murderer fell with him, shot. We had still some miles of hilly ground to go over, but the enemy contented themselves by firing into us, thereby wounding another sepoy. But they never came near us again; and probably seeing the rest of the company hurrying out to help us, they now made off. The first shots had been fired about one o'clock, the last at five.

Here is an instance of an outrage committed by a small party of malcontents against the wishes of the great body of the tribe, and a noble instance of the devotion and courage of our sepoys under most trying circumstances. One of the independent chiefs with us was shot through the face, and the three Syuds above mentioned remained, though unarmed, among the sepoys all day.

The Fakir's party returned to Gandao, and did not show up again for some months, but meantime played on the feelings of the Khwaizais, between whom and the Khan of Lalpoorah the dispute regarding the river subsidy was still going on. Urged on by him, they at length commenced acts of open hostility,—first threatened to attack Lalpoorah itself, then determined to attack the small village of Kam (lesser) Dakka, seven miles from the fort, for having supplied us with provisions.

Had they been permitted to do this, not only would it have injured our prestige, but from this point a

short march over the hills would have brought the enemy on to our main line of communications from the Khyber, along which large convoys were daily passing and repassing. To prevent it, 150 men of the Mhairwarra battalion, under Captain Creagh, were sent to protect the village. But sending so small a force seven miles from supports was only inviting attack, and in a few hours thousands of Mohmunds crossed the river and fiercely attacked the detachment. Captain Creagh had luckily taken up a strong position, against which the Mohmunds charged in vain. Again and again the Mhairwarras drove back the enemy with the bayonet, and bravely held their own till the arrival of reinforcements. First arrived a body of Lancers, who, despite the unsuitableness of the ground for cavalry, charged and inflicted a heavy loss on the Mohmunds. Some infantry and guns arriving shortly after, the Mohmunds were driven off and the Mhairwarras relieved. But now, unfortunately, it was determined to march back to the fort. Over four miles of low rocky spurs intervened, and, as might have been expected, the moment the retirement began the Mohmunds returned, and as night was drawing on, followed up the retiring column with great pertinacity, killing and wounding a few British soldiers. This move was unfortunate, in that by next morning more troops under Colonel Norman arrived on the scene; and had the enemy remained on the ground, they would in all probability have been heavily punished if, not quite cut off, in attempting to recross to their own side of the river. But the Mohmunds had had enough of it; and as, in exchange for 100 dead and many more wounded, they had but two rifles to show, the game was consid-

ered a losing one, and they never again molested us.

The Cabul river, lying north of the Khyber Pass, and cutting off from it the numerous tribes that lay among those hills and valleys by so difficult a barrier, added much to the quietude and safety of the Khyber Pass throughout the late operations. But for it large bodies of hostile Mohmunds and others may at any time have crossed the intervening hills and threatened the convoys, despite all arrangements with its proprietors and inhabitants the Afreedees. Any body crossing it in force would always have run the chance of being cut off before they were able to recross into Gandao.

Though this valley passes one of the main routes from Cabul to Peshawar; and, as we said above, had an energetic general been in command of the Ameer's troops, he might have caused no little trouble and alarm by pushing a force down that way into the valley of Peshawar, ten or twenty miles from that city, where they would have had only a few companies of native infantry and two troops of cavalry to oppose them and to hold the forts. This *kafila* route leaves the Peshawar valley and enters the hills at a point about four miles west of Shabkudr fort. For the first few miles it winds among low, dry, rocky hills, having the Mohmund valley of Pandiali on its right, beyond which comes another Mohmund valley studded with large villages, through both of which runs a fair side route into the Bajousi valley. About ten

miles from Shabkudr the main route crosses a low pass into the Gandao valley, which is almost circular, and with an area of over one hundred square miles. It is well cultivated and contains many villages. In the centre of the valley stands a low isolated hill, which would form, with the villages near it, a strong central position for any British force sent to coerce the Mohmunds. As in all these valleys the water-supply is precarious, a large water-course,—the Rod-i-Gandao,—runs through the valley; but, as usual, the water in it often sinks below the surface, though at other places the supply is so plentiful that large rice crops are produced. Both here and in the Shilman valley, "Persian wheels" are used for irrigation. The fields continue over undulating ground to the watershed of the valley Nahaki Gakhe, after which is a rather sharp descent, down which the *kafila* route winds into another large valley occupied by the Baizai and Khwaizai. The route continues westwards up this valley to another watershed—a high plateau broken by low hillocks, among which lie detached slices of cultivation, and many villages and towers of the Baizai. This plateau forms the connecting-link between the Ilazai peak and the hills hemming in the Cabul river. The water from its western slopes drains into another large water-course, which empties itself into the Cabul river near Goshtia. The eastern drainage falls into the Swat river about ten miles up from Fort Abazai.

II.

Succeeding the Afreedees westward is the large tribe of Shinwarrees, occupying the western end of the Khyber Pass, known as

Loargai, where our new cantonment of Lundi-kotal stands; and the northern slopes of the Safed-Koh facing the first twenty to thirty

miles of the Jellalabad valley. This valley is entered as the traveller descends from Lundi-kotal towards Dakka, but is a succession of low hills and ravines, till, after passing that fort, and the very small defile known as the Khurd (lesser) Khyber, he emerges into a wide valley near the village of Hazar-i-nao. Instantly the eye is struck by the grand panorama around, especially during the winter months. Some thirty miles in direct distance to the south stands the massive range, well deserving the name of Safed-Koh—the white (or snow-covered) mountains—its crest rising to 15,000 feet and more; a succession of pinnacles, on whose steep sides the snow can scarce find a resting-place. Often it falls from them in masses, and leaves bare, huge, black, rocky scarps, which form a striking contrast with their white neighbours.

Putting northwards from these crests is a succession of bold spurs, which first fall abruptly to a height of about 12,000 feet, and are thus far treeless and bare; then for some miles continue their course, with very slight gradients, where their sides are densely wooded; then fall abruptly to the height of 4000 to 6000 feet, whence they break up into hillocks and ravines, or spread northwards in fanlike plateaux, gradually falling away till they are lost in the low rice-covered lands along the banks of the Cabul river—or, before doing so, suddenly start up again in the shape of isolated small hill groups 1000 feet above the plain, which end abruptly where the waters of the river wash their bases. These latter plateaux, unlike those which fall away completely and are cultivated, are generally covered with pebbles and rocks, and are bleak and barren in the winter, hot and dusty in the summer; and those of

our troops whose misfortune it was to spend the last months of the occupation on them—encamped in small tents, or, painfully trudging backwards and forwards from the posts right and left of them, on convoy-duty, with the glare and the dust, the treeless waste and the foul smells, for their companions, while not two days' journey from them stood up the grand snow-capped forest-clothed mountains—cannot be blamed if they longed for India, and came back with heartfelt wishes never to return, after losing so many of their number when cholera and fever had sought them out sick at heart with hopes deferred or disappointed, and oppressed with *ennui*. All had heard that Cabul was a paradise of fruit. They saw nothing but stony wastes, or fever-giving rice-fields. And yet, not ten miles from the main road lay those fruit-producing orchards, the produce of which every year is carried away in thousands of camel-loads.

Rising immediately under the snows are numerous water-courses, which combine and form many large streams, with few windings, dividing the larger spurs and plateaux. They gradually widen, and where they enter the valley are sometimes hundreds of yards across. Where enclosed between the spurs, the water during several months of the year is deep and swift; but as soon as it emerges it is carried off by numerous cuttings for irrigation, till often not a drop is left where the road crosses the channels. As far as the water can be carried, the ground is almost entirely under cultivation, and among the fields lie numerous large forts with loopholed towers and walls and massive gates. Surrounding these forts, in which lie the huts of the inhabitants, are the numerous orchards of peach and apricot, pear and apple, pomegranate

and mulberry, and on most of the trees are grape vines of the finest species. In each of these valleys is one or more villages, each village consisting of thirty, forty, or more forts within short musket-range of each other. The first six or seven of these valleys are inhabited by Shinwarrees, having a total population of over 15,000 souls. Their fields extend to a distance of about ten miles from the hills, and are then succeeded by the dry, stony, barren country above alluded to, or by the villages of the peaceful Tajiks. The existence of this race is another of the peculiar characteristics of Afghanistan. Of Persian descent,—quiet, industrious, peaceful, obedient to every new ruler—belonging to the *Shia* persuasion of Moslems,—the Tajiks form the bulk of the population, not only of the Jellalabad valley, but of all the main level portions of all the chief valleys of Afghanistan, and carry on their trade, and produce most of the manufactures of Cabul, without interfering with the Pathans, and regardless of the changes of governments or dynasties. It was owing to their presence in all the large villages along the main route of our troops from Dakka to Gandamak, and in the neighbouring villages along the south bank of the Cabul river, that here no opposition was offered—quietly submitting to the new order of things, delighted with the unusually high prices obtainable for the produce of their fields.

Although less warlike than the Pathans, they are strong, and brave enough to hold their own; and if properly managed, would form a powerful support to any settled government. Hitherto their humility and love of peace have, however, only laid them open to heavy exactions; while their wilder neighbours

have borne but a very small proportion of the burdens of the state.

The Shinwarrees of the Khyber, occupying the western end, known as Loargai, not only showed no open hostility to our troops, but cordially co-operated; early brought wood, grass, &c., for sale; helped the sappers and other soldiers in cutting the roads; supplied escorts for camels when grazing, and mules for transport of stores; and invited our medical officers to attend to their sick women and children. The very next sections of the tribe—the Sungookhels and Merjankhels—acted in precisely the reverse way. Occupying cave-dwellings among the barren rugged hills lying south of the road from Lundi-kotal to Dakka—divided into small communities owning no supreme authority—living a nomad life, sometimes among the forests of the Safed-Koh and the upper portions of the Triab, at others among their own low grass-covered hillocks,—they had nothing to lose but their flocks and herds. These they early hid away among the rocky fastnesses; and from the day that our first regiment marched into Dakka, to the day the last regiment returned to the Khyber, small parties of these two sections took up their quarters in the neighbourhood of the main routes, and cut up stragglers, fired on the escorts, and even at times attempted to seize whole convoys of laden or unladen camels.

Twice, as General Tytler's column marched from Bussawal to Bazar, these constant depredations were punished by the destruction of such huts or stores as could be discovered; and as they fired at the troops these retaliated with interest, and some of the boldest of the marauders were killed and wounded. But having nothing more to lose, they continued their old games to the last. The remainder of the Shinwarrees, the

main portion of the tribe, occupying several large villages, remained neutral for several months. Their chiefs sullenly refused to tender their submission to our political officers; but, on the other hand, they never molested our camps or convoys. Certainly our posts were all in the open plain, and were very strong, each consisting of artillery, cavalry, and infantry. Between them and the nearest Shinwarree hamlets lay Tajik villages, from which we obtained supplies of forage daily, and would at once have obtained information of any expedition starting to attack us; and as this intermediate country was level, the Shinwarrees would have had to chance being hemmed in and cut up by our cavalry before they got back. So goodwill had but little to do with their sullen neutrality, as, indeed, was proved before the close of the campaign.

Jellalabad had been peacefully occupied for several months; reconnoitring and foraging parties had gone into all the neighbouring villages without causing any alarm or disturbance. The winter was passing away; ere long we would be able to make a fresh start for Cabul; or if Yakooab Khan came to terms, we might soon return to India. Yet, owing to the peculiar position we held there—having passive enemies all round that our Government strongly desired to prevent becoming active ones—not a single valley or road half a day's journey from the lines of march of the troops had been surveyed.

It was now urged by the survey officers and others, that at least some attempt might be made to find out what lay around us, and if possible to map it for future use. The Commander-in-Chief, who had just visited Jellalabad, concurred heartily, and at length two survey parties started—one under Major

Tanner, the other under Captain E. P. Leach, R.E. The former soon returned to camp; the latter came to grief. Accompanied by a company of native infantry and a party of Guides cavalry, each under a British officer, Captain Leach began work in the nearest Shinwarree village. A native chief accompanied the party, to prevent mistakes and to smoothen difficulties. Whatever his influence elsewhere, he appears to have had but little among these Shinwarrees, at least during these exciting times. For the first few days all went well. The influential chief again and again endeavoured to dissuade Leach from going here or there; but on each occasion his objections were overruled, and his prognostication of evil were unfulfilled. If the Shinwarrees showed little friendship, they were not openly hostile, and the surveyor was encouraged to proceed. But all this while one of those peculiar influences was at work, so hard to foresee, so little understood by men unacquainted with the Pathans. Perhaps a fortnight earlier the surveyor might have gone from end to end of the Shinwarree country without meeting strenuous opposition; but, as was elicited afterwards, hardly a week previously, some petty chieftain more restless than his fellows had commenced intriguing for a row. There had not been a social "Donnybrook" for several months. The Afreedees and Mohmunds round the Khyber, the Merjankhels still nearer, the Mangals and Jajis in the Kooram valley, the British troops and those of the Ameer, had each and all had a little fun during the past winter. But the Shinwarrees had sat in their villages while war and bloodshed had been frolicking all round them—while camel-loads of stores and treasure had passed in thousands within sight of their towers. It is

not difficult, where such feelings predominate, to raise a "war party," and the fever is very catching in the most peaceful communities. Soon a considerable number are bent on having a row with some one. On one side were their old enemies the Khugianees, but on the other were the almost defenceless Tajik and Dehgani villages round Pesh Bolak, and these had steadily supplied the Feringhees with stores and forage. Certainly the Sahibs might be annoyed if these were injured; and in 1842 similar acts had been followed by the rapid and wholesale destruction of offending villages. The elders remember those days, and point to the hundreds of white tents dotting the whole course of the road not twenty miles off. But the young men do not remember all that. The *moolahs* and *fakirs* promise God's blessing on all who attack the *Kafirs*, and heavenly bliss to all who are martyred for the good cause. The discussion is still hot—counsels divided as to who should bear the brunt of the first attack—when news arrives in the extensive village of Maidanak, where a large party is even now arranging the plan of operations, that a *compāss-wallah* is in the neighbourhood with a small escort.

Not only in the neighbourhood, but there, on a low hill not three miles off, he is even now standing and "opening the *purdah*." If one Sahib more than another is feared and detested by those Pathans who have never come in contact with them, it is the *compāss-wallah* or surveyor.

Not only is he supposed to be the man who guides the troops through intricate passes, who carries away maps of the country for future occasions, but with that magic *compāss* (theodolite) of his he turns hills and villages topsy-turvy, and

looks under them—some swear he can even look right through them; and if so, what is to prevent his looking slap through the walls of their houses at their wives and pretty daughters, and even through their bodies also? "Bismillah! here is the very thing for us—God has given our enemies into our hands." *Bang, bang!* go the warning muskets; *dub, dub, dub!* the sullen notes of the war-drums, rousing every man from his labour or his sleep, and, unquestioning, they follow the lead of the most prominent *moolah* against the *Kafir*. A desperate fight Leach had of it too. But for his daring gallantry his whole party might have been cut to pieces. The loss was but too heavy as it was. Lieut. Barclay, in command of the infantry escort, was mortally, and Leach severely, wounded; one havildar was killed and several sepoys wounded. But the enemy allowed a loss of over twenty killed and wounded. After sharp fighting, the party got back into the open and was safe. Of course punishment must follow. General Tytler marched out a few days after with a strong force to Maidanak; but as soon as the Shinwarrees discovered the strength of the force sent against them, and saw that able general quietly disposing his men in a way that precluded all hope of successfully attacking them, they considered discretion the better part of valour, and, quietly abandoning their villages and forts, they retired to the neighbouring heights, and sat in dense masses quietly watching our movements. Nothing could induce them to fire a shot; and of course without that the general would not fire on them.

Their chiefs came in and submitted, and were ordered by the general to accompany the surveyors all round the neighbourhood while

they sketched the country. In the meantime the offending towers were blown into the air, and the villages of the chief offenders burnt—much, however, being left for them to lose if they again gave occasion for future punishment.

The troops had had a weary night-march over stones and boulders, carrying their heavy cartouch-boxes and rations. Many had done a day's march just before starting for the night one ; but until it was evident that there would be no fighting none flagged, the "beardless boys" tramping along over rugged spurs and ravines all through the long night and hot day without a murmur, by the side of the few veterans, — the native troops, as usual, being quite as fresh on the second evening as on the first.

These wearying marches by night and day—to the soldier, apparently, objectless and resultless—were almost as trying as the killing convoyduties; yet every fresh call on them was heartily responded to. So that, despite the disappointment of this "demonstration" to Maidanak, all were ready to start cheerfully again, when, in less than forty-eight hours after their return to camp, a portion of them were again warned for night-marching by the same general.

While yet these events were passing round Maidanak, a small party of the 27th Native Infantry, under a havildar, had escorted a long string of camels and mules through Pesh Boalak to the nearest Shinwarree villages in that neighbourhood, in the wake of a Gomashata native commissariat official, who was bent on purchasing a large quantity of forage. They had gone some miles from camp, and had made several purchases, when suddenly a row was heard ahead, and presently the fat Gomashata came flying back towards the sepoy, pursued hotly

by three or four Pathana. These seeing the escort, fired into them, and were soon joined by twenty or thirty others. The havildar sent his charge quickly to the rear, and putting his men in skirmishing order, quietly retired without returning the fire till he had cautiously and thoughtfully passed all the Shinwarree towers. He then took up a position behind a pile of stones and waited for his assailants, who, emboldened by the quietness of the sepoy, now came carelessly on. A sudden volley prostrated a young chief and two of his men ; a second made the Pathans seek cover, and the sepoy came back to Bussawal without loss. The instigators of the attack were discovered, and it was determined to destroy their towers.

Late at night General Tytler, with about 1000 men of all arms, including two mountain-guns and some troops of native Lancers, marched for Deh Sarak, the scene of the outrage. Again all night we tramped through irrigated fields and over stony slopes, and as the first streaks of dawn enabled us to look round, we saw the offending village still two miles ahead. The General fearing that, as on the last occasion, the real delinquents would again give him the slip, now ordered the cavalry to the front and rapidly went off to surround the two doomed forts. It was a grand sight. The splendid body of Lancers trotting off towards the numerous large mud-forts and towers ahead, lying among fields of waving corn, dotted thickly with fruit-trees of many kinds, hemmed in between two broad water-courses which emerged from a succession of low grassy hillocks, behind which rose the massive mountain-slopes of the Safed-Koh covered with dense forests of giant cedars and pines, these gradually tapering off as they touched on

the fields of snow which lay thick up to the mighty crests, crimsoned with the first rays of the rising sun ; while above the lofty pinnacles hung huge masses of dark clouds betokening a coming storm.

Scarcely a quarter of an hour had elapsed when the rapid pattering of musketry told the infantry that to-day at least there was work to be done. A messenger came galloping back to order up the infantry and guns ; and we were soon doubling on as fast as the boulders and wet fields would let us. General Tytler had ordered the cavalry to surround the offending forts ; one of them was somewhat in advance of the other. Probably encouraged by seeing only cavalry on the ground, the Shinwarrees immediately opened fire on them ; and as the infantry reached the scene, they discovered one party dismounted and keeping off the Shinwarrees with their carbines. Gradually, but surely, these were closing in on them with drawn knives, when the Martinis in a minute changed the face of affairs.

The Shinwarrees started off in bodies of fifty to a hundred,—one taking an open line over a neighbouring plateau. Instantly the cavalry were in pursuit. As they neared this body it halted, and, with great coolness, waited till the cavalry were within a dozen yards, then gave them a volley, emptying a few saddles. But in another moment the Lancers, headed by the British officers, were into and through them, and, in less time than it takes to write it, every man of them lay dead on the plain. Then one fort after another was cleared, many individual Shinwarrees standing firm to the last with great pertinacity.

The village cleared, the troops now commenced the mining of the doomed towers. While this was doing hours passed, and we could see dense masses of the enemy

gathering from all sides on our front and flanks. Behind us were some two thousand "friendly" spectators. Clustered round one of the forts of Deh Sarak was a party of men, women, and children. These had refrained from attacking the foraging party, and from firing on the cavalry, and their dwellings were safe. Throughout the day they never budged from their walls, even when, later on, they were between a cross-fire. And yet they were of the same tribe and of the same village as the men with whom we were fighting !

Shortly after, word was brought in to Major Connolly, the Political Officer, that the *Jirgah* (tribal council) wished to come in and treat for terms. "Cease firing" was ordered in consequence. But while this order remained in force, the masses of the enemy closed in. Up went one of the towers, a mass of earth and loose stones, and the retirement began. Immediately the whole country was alive, and heavy firing commenced on all sides. Once again the General halted till the second tower was about to rise. Under cover of the banks of the water-courses mentioned above, large bodies of Shinwarrees closed in towards our flanks. These two water-courses, after passing the village, met at a point near where our road back to camp lay, and were there covered with long reeds. The object of the enemy was to get into these reeds and dash into us as we retired. Luckily our General knew their tactics well. The mining was completed ; the retirement had recommenced ; the tower rose in a dense cloud, with a loud roar, in the air, and at the same moment a wild yell rang over every hill, "Ali ! Ali !" and a large body furiously dashed at our nearest skirmishers, led by a party of fanatic *moollahs*. In a moment

after, when their assailants were within fifty yards, the Martinis rattled out, and in less than a minute over 100 of the enemy were prostrate. Again and again they tried to rush in with their knives, but without success; and before long we were all safe across the *nullahs* (water-courses), and were quietly forming up again to receive them. They came down in mass, but stopped short on the farther bank, well out of rifle-range, and our retirement continued. Frightened out of their wits, the inhabitants of Peesh Bolak begged the protection of the General from the infuriated Shinwarrees, and it was accorded. A party of Goorkhas held the village all night; and before morning, when the enemy had realised their loss of 400 to 500 of their bravest, they had dispersed and gone back with their dead and wounded to their homes. Shortly after, their chiefs came in and tendered their submission, and never again molested us. Their country had meanwhile been mapped. On asking why they had so fiercely attacked us, they said that twice before the Ameer had sent troops to punish them. On each occasion these troops had driven them from their villages in the morning, but had been hemmed in and cut to pieces as they retired in the evening, and they had hoped that our fate would have been similar.

It should not be concluded from this statement that the Shinwarrees do not recognise the Ameer's authority. To avoid paying taxes, they, like all other Pathan tribes, will oppose his troops, especially after an enhancement of rates; but they acknowledge his suzerainty, supply a contingent for his army, and would at all times be ready to side with him in case of foreign invasion.

Our loss in the engagement was two killed and about fifteen wounded. The enemy fired wildly and

carelessly, their endeavours being almost solely directed to closing in on the skirmishers with their knives. From what we saw here and elsewhere, we cannot help thinking that the loose skirmishing order of fighting is not nearly so well adapted to fighting these *irregular* combatants as the old *line*, especially when retiring. So long as our troops advance the enemy gives way, and the rapid fire of skirmishers, followed by some companies in close order, hastens their movements. But when—as is so often the case—we are retiring, the bravest of the enemy rapidly follow, crouching from bush to bush and from rock to rock, giving very little opportunity for careful shooting to our skirmishers; and when these are scattered in rough ground, individuals linger here and there for a last shot, and more than once have been surprised and cut off from their comrades before they were aware of the proximity of their lurking enemy. Their bodies are then, perforce, left to be mutilated, and their rifles fall into the enemy's hands; or if efforts are made to recover them or their arms, those who go back for them are themselves liable to be surrounded and cut off; whereas if the last files retire in line, keeping *pretty* close together, a wounded man and his weapons can immediately be taken up by his comrades without delays occurring; and if the enemy does close in, he has to meet a line of bayonets, besides the rapid fire of the Martini. Further, until we can put more veterans into the field, the continuous retirement over rough ground, followed by yelling fiends with drawn swords, frantic, and regardless of death, yet bobbing about in a way which renders shooting uncertain, will act prejudicially on the retiring soldiers'

feelings; and if a few men are suddenly taken unawares and become panic-stricken, or think it advisable or the right thing to do to make a run for their supports, the consequences might at times be disastrous.

The enemies we have to deal with in these frontier wars are quite as likely to miss every shot when firing at a line two or four deep as at scattered bodies of skirmishers. In the one case, if they do hit a man, he is carried on easily by his comrades; in the other, he probably falls behind a bush or rock unseen by his friends, and his wounded or dead body becomes the sheath of scores of knives, and his rifle and cartridges are carried off in triumph.

It has been mentioned above, that behind us were some two thousand spectators. Many of these had come from far. As soon as they saw our retirement commenced, and the thousands of the enemy closing in with wild yells from all sides, they concluded we were lost, and made themselves scarce as soon as possible, spreading a report that we had been repulsed by the Shinwarrees. The rumour, as usual, lost nothing in its further progress. The Khugianees heard that we had lost two guns and a general. Immediately after, a stir was observable all round, and a noted Ghilzai chief, Azmatoollah Khan, who had from the first done his utmost to rouse an opposition against us, was soon very busy.

The Khugianees succeed the Shinwarrees among the slopes and at the base of the Safed-Koh, westward as far as the Surkhab river, some forty miles from Jellalabad. They are then succeeded by the Ghilzais, who occupy the range of hills connecting the Safed-Koh with the Sia-Koh (black mountain), through which runs the Jug-

dulluk Pass, and the road to Cabul *via* Tezeen. They also occupy the Sia-Koh and the Lughman valley, through which flows the Cabul river proper after leaving the Cabul valley. These two large tribes—the only ones that now lay on our onward line of march to Cabul—were thrown into considerable excitement by the news from the Shinwarree country, and both determined not only to oppose our farther progress, but also, if possible, to annoy us where we were. This latter they could only hope to accomplish at present by attacking and destroying the villages that were supplying us with forage and had placed themselves under our protection. The political officers discovered that Azmatoollah was about to raid into the Lughman valley, and the Khugianees were to attack Futtehabad and other Tajik villages within twenty miles of Jellalabad. Accordingly, troops were sent off in different directions to prevent this, and if possible to seize Azmatoollah. General M'Pherson started by night with a column to cross into the Lughman valley over the Safed-Koh. Colonel Campbell of the Guide Corps, with a smaller column, took a different route, to co-operate; while a body of cavalry, composed of some troops of Hussars and native Lancers, started to cross the Cabul river near Jellalabad. It was hoped that these latter would be in time to cut off Azmatoollah's retreat from M'Pherson's columns. They rode gaily to the ford on a bright moonlight night. The native cavalry crossed over its zigzag windings in safety, but the Hussars met with the fearful disaster so much talked of and inquired into, by which they lost an officer and forty-seven men. Those of them who escaped returned to camp, but the rest of the party continued their march, only to return in the

evening disappointed ; for while M'Pherson's column was painfully climbing up the barren, hot, rocky slopes of the Sia-Koh, Azmatoolah recrossed the Cabul river and fled into the mountain fastnesses beyond. The troops returned disgusted from their wearying and disappointing march ; but it was not without its effect. "Never before," said the people, "have we heard of an army crossing that dreadful route by day, and these Feringhees do it by night. What is safe from their attacks ?"

Meanwhile General Gough had started for Futtehabad, on the direct route to Cabul, with about 10,000 infantry, the remaining troops of the 10th Hussars, some troops of the Guides cavalry, and four R.H.A. guns. All was quiet at Futtehabad, and next day reconnoitring parties were sent out. And well it was so. In every Khugianee village the war-drums were beating, and thousands gathering. One reconnoitring party was fired into and followed up. The pickets near Futtehabad reported that there was heavy firing towards Gandamuk, so General Gough at once hurried out with his guns and cavalry to rescue the party. Ordering 400 infantry to follow, some five miles from camp he found the enemy already strongly posted on the crest of a plateau about a mile south of the road and parallel to it. Here they had constructed a long line of breastworks, behind which were posted several thousands, while other large parties were already hurrying down the water-courses which flanked the plateau on which Gough now stood with his cavalry and guns : the infantry were coming up at the double. The guns now advanced to within 1200 yards of the breastworks and opened fire with shell ; the flanks of the enemy were rapidly pushing in to

try and surround Gough, and a body of them soon opened fire on the guns from within a hundred yards. Gough now withdrew his guns and cavalry some 500 yards. As soon as he did so, with loud yells the main body of the enemy left the breastworks and rushed towards him. Again their foremost were within short musket-range when the Guides and Hussars charged into them. The Guides, led by Major Wigram Battye, dashed across a rocky ravine and down a steep slope covered with boulders, straight at a large body who quietly awaited them behind some stone walls enclosing a field ; and as Battye rode into them, a volley killed him and his horse and a native officer. Instantly with wild yells the Pathans rushed forward to knife him, but were met by his intrepid Sowars, and a fierce hand-to-hand combat ensued. Nine bodies of Khugianees lay dead round Battye, but not a knife had entered him. Not one of the large body of Khugianees left the ground alive ; for by this time Lieut. Hamilton had swept round them with another troop, and the infuriated Sowars spared none. Nor did the Khugianees ask mercy : drawing their knives, they stood and fiercely cut at horses and riders, wounding more than thirty men and more horses, not one of whom, perhaps, would have been touched had the Sowars carried lances. The Hussars, too, had charged into the enemy, and now they wavered and gave ground. Meanwhile on the left the infantry had arrived. Lieutenant Wiseman headed a rather premature charge into a dense mass of the enemy clustered round a huge standard. He dashed his sword through the standard-bearer, but was cut down, and for a few moments the infantry were checked, then readvanced. By this time the

centre and left of the enemy were already giving ground before the cavalry; their right also fell back, wavered, and broke, and soon the whole were flying in dense masses, and were pursued for over five miles by the cavalry. Their loss exceeded 600 killed and wounded; ours some 40 to 50 killed and wounded, besides the two British officers. Battye's death alone would have dimmed a greater victory. The medical officer related that he was attending a wounded Sowar whom he had placed under chloroform. When the Sowar regained his senses he burst out crying. The officer, on trying to console him, received the reply, "What use is my life to me, now that Battye Sahib has gone?" He was not the only man who felt thus.

The result of the action was soon apparent. The Khugianee *Jirgah* came into Futtehabad and submitted, and from that day the tribe never molested us. On the contrary, when we went on to Gandamuk they swarmed into camp with provisions, worked on the roads, cut timber on the Safed-Koh, and brought it in for the bridge and other works at Gandamuk; and reconnoitring parties went all over their country without once meeting opposition. The Khugianees and Ghilzais had feared that, so soon as we had collected in sufficient strength at Gandamuk, we would burn, harry, and destroy, in revenge for the disasters of the former war. But when they found themselves treated with every consideration, even when the whole of the 1st division of our army was encamped within rifle-range of their forts, they settled down. From the camp at Gandamuk, or Safed Sang, we could see the low hillock on which a small remnant of British troops made their last stand in the winter of 1841-42. Among

the chiefs who made themselves useful to us was Hyder Khan of Gandamuk, who had been in that last struggle. He thus described it: "News arrived here that the Feringhees were retiring through the hills, surrounded by hosts of enemies, chiefly Ghilzais; and orders came from Sirdar Akbar Khan for all true Khugianees to join in the destruction of the Kafirs. We soon mustered about 6000 men, and marched up the road towards Jugdulluk, where heavy firing was going on. As we neared the Surkhi-Koh (or red hill) we saw a mere handful of *gora-logs* (white folks—soldiers)—about 80 to 100—turning that corner, with swarms of Ghilzais firing into them. As they saw our masses advancing to meet them, they turned aside and went to the top of the hillock. Here they formed square with fixed bayonets, and shot us down as we closed on them. We could not get near them till they ceased firing. Concluding that they had no more ammunition, we rushed in on them with loud shouts from all sides. They stood still till we were within a dozen yards of them, then fired their last volley with deadly effect into us, and charged with their bayonets. This broke them, and one by one we hemmed them in and cut them down; but six of us fell for each one of them. Soban Allah! I have never seen such fighting, and I determined never to fight Feringhees again."

Yakoob Khan came into Gandamuk, the terms of treaty were arranged, and we were about to start back to India. Before us stood up the giant crest of the Safed-Koh—its highest peak, Sikarram, was within thirty miles of us. It was hard to go back without at least once gaining the mighty crest on which no Englishman had yet stood. Permission to make the at-

tempt—for geographical reasons—was asked and given; and having been supplied with an escort of Khugianees, we started. It was rather early in the year for the journey, and the snow covered miles of intervening hills, but time was running short. The escort was under the orders of a son of the before-mentioned Hyder Khan. Under him were two old Mulliks, who had both been in the last struggle described above, and also in the late action near Futtehabad. One of the escort still wore the Ameer's uniform, and humorously pointed to a foot-long cut in the tail of his coat, given by a Goorkha's *kookrie* (knife) at the storming of the Peiwar Kotal. Another man, named Sultan, a hunter by profession, had eighteen old knife-wounds on his body, of which six at least would probably have been fatal if received by an Englishman. He and a brother had a few years previously been out towards the neighbouring Khugianee village of Murkikhel, and had suddenly been set upon by three men of that section, with whom they had had a long-standing feud. One man shot his brother, and was shot in his turn by Sultan. The others cut his head open with their knives, and he dropped senseless. Next morning he awoke in his own hut, and found he had been cut in eighteen places; was confined to bed for six weeks, then recovered, and was now as hearty as ever. "And how about the two men who had done you so much injury?" we asked. "I settled the account shortly after: they are not alive now." Several others of the escort had bullet and knife wounds to show, and had committed a few murders in their day; so altogether we were in very superior company.

Taking our blankets and a week's rations (which were carried by the

escort), we started early on the morning of the 26th. Our route lay for the first six miles over the plateau between the camp and the base of the Safed-Koh. We then entered the villages of Mahmakhel and Kudikhel, destroyed by General Pollock's force in the first war, then across a wide stream, fordable every morning but a roaring torrent by evening. Then came a stiff climb up a bare rocky slope, till attaining a height of 8000 feet. Here the slope upwards was more gradual, and our way lay over green flats covered with soft grass, and dotted with many wild flowers, tulips, and daisies and lilies, and among forests of stunted oaks. This continued till we reached the skirts of the pine-forests, at an elevation of about 9500 feet. As we had been sketching the country *en route* as we came along, it was near evening, and we determined to halt for the night near some tent-dwellings of nomad shepherds, where our escort were sure of a good evening meal of mutton and fresh milk. We were on the crest of a long spur, and below our right lay a deep mountain gorge forming the boundary-line between Khugiani and Ghilzai country. Below us we could see some hamlets of the Ghilzai village of Lokau, and it was just possible that we might find ourselves attacked at night; so we chose a strong position on the crest of a precipice, and lay down to sleep about ten at night, close under a long, low wall, intended to be utilised as a breastwork if needed. The air was fresh and cold, and, being obliged to put out our fires for fear of stray shots, we were glad to roll ourselves well up in our blankets. We slept on quietly till about 3 A.M., when some shots rang in the air, echoed far and near among the mountains, and roused us all in a moment. Of course, we thought

we were in for a row, and the first thing we noticed was the young Khan standing by me with drawn sword, shouting to the sentries to ask what was up. After considerable talking, it was said that the sentries had long watched some jackals prowling round the remains of the night's meal, and being unable longer to restrain their sporting proclivities, they had fired at these animals. Of course we pretended to accept this explanation undoubtedly,—it was as likely to be true as any other solution,—and went to sleep again till daylight. We were early up, and after a hasty meal were again trudging on briskly, invigorated by the crisp morning breeze, through the mighty forests that now thickly clothed the mountain-slopes. Giant pines, some rising to 130 and more feet, of four kinds: the Deodar or Ulmunza (*Cedrus deodarus*), Nakthar (*Pinus excelsa*), Sarup (*Abies Webbiana*), and Chilgoza (edible pine). The nuts of this last species are sent in hundreds of camel-loads to the Indian market yearly; but as they are roasted as soon as collected, they cannot be utilised for sowing. Unfortunately, when we were among them, all that had not been collected had fallen and had sprouted, or had rotted on the ground. Among the wild flowers to be found here is a beautiful tiger-lily with six flowers on each stem. All day we tramped through the splendid forests without seeing a single wild animal, few birds, and the only reptiles two small turtles. How they got here we cannot say, but they are said to be numerous among these hills. After passing the elevation of 12,000 feet the pines lessened, and at length ceased. Juniper-bushes crawling over the slopes were met up to nearly 14,000 feet, and then nought but snow ahead. Just before reaching the

snow the ground was carpeted with crocus, polyanthus, and many other beautiful flowers. Evening was already drawing on, and we determined to descend to the bed of the stream again, where its height was 11,000 feet. When we reached it, huge rocky precipices rose above us many thousand feet; near the base on one side was a large cave capable of holding some forty or fifty men, approachable only from below. In this we would be safe from stray shots, in a good defensible position, and protected from the breeze. So we decided to make it our halting-place for the night. In comparative security we revelled in the warmth of a huge fire, and after dinner spent a jolly evening. One of our party was the bard of a section of the Khugianee, who had brought his *sitara* (guitar) with him; and after we had served out some ginger-wine to those who cared for it, and drank it—though they refused the more potent and well-known “brandy sharab” that I was only too pleased to keep for myself—the bard gave us a few songs. At length one more exciting than the rest stirred the blood of our escort, and soon a circle formed round the fire, and went through a lively sword-dance, with the unusual accompaniment of more than one song. First the usual nasal sing-song; then a laughable mock-heroic; then the tribal *seranai* or war-song. This, as usual, was kept up till the dancers worked themselves into a seeming frenzy, and were exhausted. Then my Punjabi attendants from the hills round Cashmere took up the game, and treated the Pathans to their style of sword-dance. Lastly, one individual divested himself of all but a very little strip of clothing, tossed his long hair round his face, and jumped and danced round the fire, yelling at intervals, “Allahi!

allahi!" each time louder and faster, till he frothed at the mouth, had his muscles drawn like cords, his eyes wild and glaring, and was *pro tem.* a decided maniac, and was just about to throw himself over the rocks, when he was seized by half-a-dozen of the others, and was held down forcibly, yelling like a fiend till his strength was exhausted, his muscles relaxed, and he fell into a deep sleep. This exhibition was loudly applauded by the Pathans till its close, and formed the main topic of conversation till we were asleep. The night passed off quietly, and next morning we started early for the neighbouring range of snow, 15,000 feet high. In half an hour we were walking over the snow-fields, and continued on them all day, sketching the country round, and obtaining a fine view of the eastern sources of the Surkhab river, so long hidden from our side. Descending towards evening to the height of 12,000 feet, we determined here to take up our quarters for the night, within four or five miles of the great peak of Sikarram. We could find neither cave nor trees to lie under, so had to roll ourselves in our blankets behind a large rock, and sleep through the cold night as best we could, posting and warning the sentries for the night. At early dawn we were all up, and this morning managed to have coffee all round, then started. With us were our hill-men from British territory, carrying the survey instruments, &c.—Sultan, the *shikari* before mentioned, and five others. We had first to descend 1000 feet down steep rocks covered with frozen snow, then began our ascent. Until the sun has been shining on the snow-fields for some hours, the surface is frozen hard, and it is difficult to keep the footing. We had preferred to wear good strong English boots,

with the armed sole of which we could kick an impression on the snow very often; the others had wrapped the skins of the sheep slaughtered for dinner *en route* in strips, with the hair outwards, round their feet and ankles; but before long we had to take to cutting steps in the hard snow, our only weapon for the purpose being our Pathan knives. With these we had to chop, chop, a few inches for each step for about 3000 feet; then came a mile of level ground, one large field of deep snow. Ahead of us stood Sikarram; all round us many of his sisters, almost as high as himself. Through one of the *gullies* (cols) we looked down on the snow-covered lake or tarn, about 300 yards square, called the Haoza Khas, or clear tank, where the eastern or Mangal branch of the Surkhab takes its rise. Far below were the Ghilzai hamlets of Mangal. After crossing the field, we had yet another stiff climb of 1000 feet. The crest hung over us dangerously, and the ascent was so steep that we had to make several zigzags, which added to our labour. Once again we reached the crest; and 500 yards more and a short climb took us to the extreme summit of the highest peak of the Safed-Koh, 15,620 feet above sea-level, and 11,000 above the camp at Gandamak. A feeling of pride in being the first European who had stood on this spot might be excused. Quickly—while those less interested were recovering their breath, and munching *chappatis* with snow—we put up our theodolite, and, levelling it, made sure that this was indeed the highest point of the range. Then successively we looked down on the rice-fields of the Kurram valley, the tents dotted among the trees of the Peiwar Kotal, the large camps, rows of horses, and numerous stone-built

pickets of Alikhel; farther south, the hills round Khost; to the west, a broad valley coming from the direction of Ghazni; more north, the peaks round the Shutar-gardan Pass, and on across the gap showing where lay the valley of Cabul itself, to the snows beyond; then northwards over the Gandamuk and Jellalabad valleys, over the crests of the snowy ranges of the Safed-Koh surrounding the glens of Kafiristan, towards which even then one solitary Englishman, Major Turner of the Survey of India, was in vain trying to wend his way through the suspicious intermediate tribes; and beyond all, stood up one giant pyramid, *perhaps* seen for the first time by a European—probably 2500 feet high, if not higher. To the west ran the long range of the Safed-Koh, its top one field of snow, broken into irregular fantastic peaks, falling towards Kurram like a huge wall; and beyond, the hills of Tirah and the Khyber. For two hours we were very busy with the theodolite and field-book; but meantime clouds had been gathering overhead, and the first flakes of snow warned us—from old experience—that it was time to move off. Meantime the sun had softened the snow, and every step down we sank thigh-deep for some miles—could not even relieve the journey by a slide. We had given an attendant a soda-water bottle in the morning, intending to leave it on the summit, but of course it had been forgotten, and we had to content ourselves by making a small cairn with the few stones that lay among the snow on the top. Not fifty yards below was a pile of stones ornamented with some twenty long sticks—the *ziarat* or shrine of some Fakir, said to be that of the Syud Karram or Si Karram, from which some derived the name of the peak. It had long been

supposed to be a corruption of Sitaram—a Hindoo celebrity of the olden times; but this the Moslems distinctly disavow. Si Karram—the “three virtues”—said a grey-beard, was one of Mohammed’s disciples who had shown his devotion to the Prophet by knocking out all his own teeth when the Prophet had one knocked out by a stone in the battle in the Vale of Beder. On Mohammed’s death his garment was tried on by all the worthies standing round, but his “mantle” fitted none but Si Karram (it was useless one remarking that this same tale was told of some other disciples). After the Prophet’s death Si Kirram wandered eastwards preaching, and being driven here for refuge, or coming here like Elijah to the top of Horeb, he was martyred. There are other reasons also given for the name, but this suits best.

Our descent was long and tedious, owing to the snow now being wet and soft; but before dark we were down to our night’s resting-place. Two days after, we were not a little pleased to find ourselves again safe in camp. A month later much of the ground covered with snow in May would have been clear, and by August flocks and herds graze within a mile of Si Karram’s shrine. We nowhere saw any glaciers; and of living things, only the distant cry of the snow-pheasant was heard, and we sometimes saw the footmarks of ibex and bears, but not the animals. Game is wonderfully scarce—the hill-slopes and forests tenantless except during the hotter months, when the sheep and cattle graze on the abundant grass.

A very small strip of the country between Gandamuk and the Khyber alone remained unsurveyed, and we were now ordered to march through and survey it—an escort

of 60 Lancers under a British officer, and an officer of the Ameer's, being told off to accompany us. When first we appeared near the villages of Azam, the people began hastily to arm themselves, as if with hostile intentions, determined to oppose the raising of their *purdah* ; but when Mahomed Shahgassi, the Ameer's officer, rode forward and explained that we were there with the Ameer's consent, they put away their arms, and were friendly at once. At night we put up in the forts, and were made extremely comfortable. The Shahgassi had been one of the officers told off to attend the Russian Embassy in Cabul, and had been with them at Tashkend, and he now drew very unfavourable comparisons. When we objected to putting up in the forts, if, by doing so, we had to turn the women and children out, he said a Russian officer would have probably been delighted to see these put to inconvenience, or, at any rate, would never have thought of inconveniencing himself for them. He specially commented on their uncivil treatment of all who came near them,—“Speaking to the officers and respectable residents in the same insulting and impetuous tone they used to servants and criminals ; putting up in the Musjids ; not paying for provisions ;

and some not over-veracious in their statements.”

He remarked, among other things, on the fact that when Ameer Yakoob Khan visited the British camp, even the soldiers *not on duty* stood up as he passed and respectfully saluted him. This seemed to impress him and the other officers of the Ameer very favourably. As to our paying for provisions from the villages, he remarked that we had paid so high for everything that the people would never be content to take the old normal price again ; also dwelt very strongly on the fact of not a single outrage having been committed on the women throughout the occupation by either officers or men, British or native. “Never,” said he and others to whom we spoke, “have we seen an army at once so powerful and so courteous and quiet ; it is no wonder you can march them to the ends of the world.” Nor must it be supposed that they spoke thus from mere fear or courtesy ; they perfectly well understood that we held no high position in the force, either military or political ; and talked on that and all other subjects with extreme freedom, not hesitating to express adverse opinions when inclined to do so—as when speaking of the first Cabul war and its causes and consequences, for instance.

THE RECESS.

NEARLY half of the interval between last session and the next has passed, and the result of the autumn discussions admits of no doubt whatever. An unusual interest has attached to the speeches of the more prominent politicians, for they serve to disclose the issues which will be formally presented to the electors at the dissolution of the present Parliament. From those speeches it seems to be quite clear, that whatever may be the views of the titular chiefs of the Opposition, and whatever may have been the policy of the Liberal party under Lord Palmerston, and the character of the support tendered by a large portion of that party in Parliament and the country to the policy of Lord Beaconsfield, the more energetic of its members are resolved to seek from the constituencies a sweeping condemnation of the Treaty of Berlin and the whole course of the recent foreign policy of the country. The views of Mr Gladstone are in the ascendant. The issues at the next election are being shaped by him, and expressed in the very spirit which he has vainly endeavoured to infuse during the progress of that policy. It is round his standard that the Liberal party appears to be rallying; it is from Midlothian, and not from North Lancashire, that the ensuing campaign will derive its aims and spirit.

Upon the prudence of this plan of operations we will forbear observation. It is no business of ours to estimate its wisdom, from the point of view of sound Opposition tactics. There can be no doubt but that the issue is a broad one, clearly raised, and momentous in its character. Further than that, it is a perfectly

honest and straightforward course that the Opposition is adopting. When we recall the history of the last four years—the manner in which; at the very crisis when the schemes of the Triple Alliance were ripening into active and open aggression, it was sought to throw the whole force of public opinion on the side of the aggressors and against the Ministers of the English Crown, the persistent sympathy for Russia and hostility to Turkey, the invectives against the Treaty of Paris and all who appealed to it, the approval of the Treaty of San Stefano, the opposition to all resistance to Russia even when her army was at the gates of Constantinople and the lines of Bulair, the anxiety to go into Congress upon the Russian terms, and the denunciation of every provision in the Treaty which served to limit her encroachments and cancel her successes,—we feel that for the Liberal party to have shrunk from submitting their conduct to the opinion of the constituencies would have been an act of political cowardice which, for all time, would have stamped them with infamy and treachery. Moreover, it is not to be supposed for one moment that they had any option in the matter. It is in vain to say that a large portion of the party out of doors disapproved the manoeuvres of their more active representatives, or that Lords Granville and Hartington exhibited more prudence, or that the Government majorities were successively increased from 50 to upwards of 130 by the steady support of influential members of the Opposition in both Houses of Parliament. The fact is that, whether by their misfortune or their fault, the Lib-

eral party has, through the deliberate and persistent action of its more energetic and determined representatives, identified itself throughout the past four years with a policy of encouraging Russian aggression, of violating treaties, of abandoning the protection of British interests whether in Europe or in Asia. It has done so, loudly and defiantly, in marked contrast to its policy and conduct when under the guidance of Lord Palmerston, and to an extent which, in 1876, rendered the outbreak of the war inevitable, and in 1878 encouraged Russia to go to the full length of hostility to Great Britain, both in Europe and Asia, short of actual war. If the Liberal party had, after a course of political conduct which defies description and confounds all criticism, shrunk from submitting it to the judgment of the country, on the vain plea that, as it was disapproved by their responsible leaders, and baffled by a considerable section of themselves, they were not, as a party, politically responsible, their opponents would never have permitted the humiliating retreat. The time is fast approaching when they must either voluntarily face the consequences of their conduct, or submit to be dragged before the electors as culprits to be condemned. The momentous issue which must be decided is, whether a political party shall, in office, bind the country by solemn treaty under certain definite obligations to all Europe, and in Opposition, for party purposes, baffle and denounce their fulfilment; whether it shall, in office, expend the blood and treasure of the country in vindication of a policy of resistance to Russian aggression, and in Opposition, for party purposes, demand the reversal of that policy, and not merely thwart and hinder the Min-

isters of their own country, but actually encourage and stimulate the very schemes on the part of Russian statesmen which they had themselves previously gone to war to resist. That issue stands in the very forefront of those which have to be disposed of, and the Liberal party is too closely identified with those who have assumed to represent it to be able to escape the consequences. The next issue is whether a Government which, in spite of the most overwhelming obstacles placed in its path both at home and abroad—in spite of the complete victory of the Russian armies in a war urged on by the English Opposition,—nevertheless dissolved the alliance and baffled the projects of the Three Emperors, compelled the submission of the Treaty of San Stefano to a congress, replaced the Treaty of Paris by that of Berlin, which reduced the fruits of Russian victory, reconstituted South-east Europe, placed Austria across the path of Russia, and provided for the better government of the provinces, does or does not deserve well of the country. War has been honourably averted, and the European dominions of the Sultan reconstituted, with better guarantees for tranquillity within and without than have ever before existed. The Treaty of Berlin, whatever critics may say, remains the charter of European policy, the document to which all nations appeal as the foundation of their international right in the East, which Russia is powerless to elude, and every one of the signatory Powers is determined should be preserved complete and inviolate.

It is impossible to believe that the English public will ever deliberately sanction the mode of conducting a Parliamentary Opposition which we have witnessed during

the last four years. It is a scandal and reproach to free institutions, to the very system itself of Parliamentary government, that such conduct should have been practicable. If any influential members of the Liberal party had come to the matured conclusion that the policy of the Foreign Office for the last fifty years ought to be reversed, and that our interests in the East, the safety of Constantinople, the integrity of the Ottoman empire, the existing regulation of the Straits, were no longer worth the risk and effort of vindicating them, it was at all times in their power to submit that view of public policy for the consideration and decision of Parliament. They perpetually shrank from that course,—partly because it was impossible to obtain the support of a sufficient section of their own party—partly because, under any circumstances, they would necessarily have been in a minority. Accordingly, from first to last, during a crisis of no ordinary duration and magnitude, questions involving the most difficult and delicate considerations of our rights and duties in reference to other countries, and in reference to the future security of the empire, were tossed about from platform to platform, and from one meeting of political fanatics to another, till there was hardly a suggestion, however wild and absurd, which had not some unanimous resolution of a “great and important” meeting in its favour. It was during the autumn of 1876 that the Russian Government entered upon the course which inevitably tended to war. When the Conference opened at Constantinople, preparations for invasion and defence had gone too far to be stayed. The English public rapidly recovered its composure when it witnessed the consequences of its temporary frenzy.

The authors of the tumult endeavoured to excuse themselves in laboured speeches to a packed Conference at St James’s Hall; but on the meeting of Parliament not a voice was raised or a resolution moved in their favour, or on behalf of the conduct which they had adopted, or the policy which they had announced. Though bent upon the extinction of the Turkish empire—upon wringing the neck of its power, as they called it, on the Bosphorus,—and averse to the vindication of British interests as a base and selfish expedient, they never brought the policy of conditional neutrality, with its clear statement of such interests as must not be infringed, to the test of Parliamentary debate and decision. When at last the fleet was sent to Constantinople, the vote of credit moved, the reserves called out, and Indian troops brought to Malta, though the Treaty of San Stefano jeopardised every interest which the Crimean war had been fought to maintain, though the establishment of Russian power on the ruins of the Turkish empire menaced every interest which we held sacred, lowered our reputation, and was fraught with imminent danger to our empire in the East,—every step which the Ministers of the Crown, in the execution of their bounden duty, took to maintain the rights of the country was opposed and denounced with every exaggeration of abuse and denunciation. If they insisted on Russia submitting her whole treaty, and not merely such parts as she chose, to the Congress, they were condemned for seeking a mere diplomatic victory, regardless of the risk of war. When at last the Treaty was concluded, and Europe had unanimously decreed, at the instance of England, that Russia should withdraw her troops from Turkish soil,

and that Turkey should be reconstituted and reformed, and had practically arranged that for the future Austria, backed by Germany, should defend the Danube, and England should guard the Asiatic frontier, the signal triumph of this country was for a time drowned in a perfect deluge of reproaches, that liberty, forsooth, had been betrayed, and that the provisions of the Treaty could never be accomplished. One by one they have been accomplished, and then the cry is changed. The Treaty was only the San Stefano Convention in another form; it settles nothing, and is a sham in all its parts.

Such has been the course of Opposition tactics; and this haphazard style of conducting party warfare is supposed to be worthy of the name of statesmanship, and entitled to the confidence and approval of the country. Precisely the same course has been pursued with regard to Afghanistan. In spite of uncontradicted evidence of Shere Ali's enmity and Russian military designs in those regions, admitted to have been on the eve of execution, but countermanded when the Treaty was signed—in spite of invitations from the Duke of Somerset, and others of their own party, to state what possible alternative was open,—the managers of party warfare filled the air with their denunciation of any step being taken to strengthen the Indian frontier, and our hold on Afghanistan, and with their prophecies of impending disaster. In a few short months the Treaty of Gandamak confuted these denunciations and prophecies. A cruel massacre of our Envoy and his suite at Cabul came like a god-send to the Opposition. Instantly the cry was raised of the whole Afghan race having risen in arms; of overwhelming difficulties confronting the Government; of a prob-

able rising throughout the whole Indian empire to throw off the dominion of the Queen. Again a quick and burning disappointment comes, and the army of the Indian Government, with the Ameer in their train, is seen speedily and triumphantly marching to the suppression of a local *émeute*, and the punishment of a lawless murder. No doubt the position is still one of difficulty and perplexity. The question is settled whether England or Russia should dominate in Afghanistan, and whether the military passes should be controlled by ourselves or our enemies. We have, so far, gained a victory which was indispensable to our security; and if its consequences involve a considerable increase to our responsibilities, even the necessity of supervising the government of the country, we must accept them as inevitable.

We defy any one to produce the slightest parallel to this conduct since the completion of parliamentary supremacy in 1832. If we go back to the days of the Peninsular war and the aspirations of the then Liberal Opposition, that Wellington and his troops might be driven into the sea, we feel that we are under a different climate of political morality, and that, at that time, the power of public opinion being less, the responsibility of public men was proportionately decreased. Violent language might possibly be excused as the only mode of gaining attention to moderate sentiments. But in these days of household suffrage, cheap newspapers, and incessant public meetings, a responsibility devolves upon the leaders of the Opposition only second to that which the Ministers of the Crown incur. It is perfectly intolerable, and the constituencies must be appealed to on the subject, that when Parliament and the nation have deliberately decided to pursue

the traditional policy of the country, and abide by the treaties which have been made, any considerable knot of politicians, whilst shrinking from parliamentary action, should do all in their power to impede the action of the Executive, encourage the designs of the hostile rivals of their country, and excite the utmost antipathy to our allies. The pernicious consequences of their action have been thus described by Lord Salisbury, and the accusation must be dealt with at the next election:—

“It has much increased our difficulties that we have always had beside us those who seemed to be qualified, by possession in former times of the confidence of the people, to speak, who were speaking against the recorded majorities of Parliament, but yet who announced boldly and loudly, and with a pertinacity which conveyed some amount of belief to foreign Powers, that we, in taking the course which we did take, were not representing the true feelings of the English people. The repeated decisions of Parliament showed that that boast was untrue. But it was made loudly enough, and long enough, at a time when Parliament could not speak, to plunge Europe into the horrors of war, and to surround this country with innumerable difficulties.”

As the time of the next general election approaches, we may expect to see more than one attempted vindication of recent tactics put forward under cover of denouncing the Ministry, its foreign policy, and its taxation. Sir William Harcourt has been recently paying the oratorical price for some complimentary dinners. If the dinners were worth the price, they must have been uncommonly good. But when the jingle of epigram, alliteration, and wit has ceased, and we endeavour to recall what we have read or heard, it is only the old tale that everything has tended to delusion and disaster, and that

nothing will be properly managed till the speaker and his friends are placed in office. The strains are as monotonous as those of an Italian organ-grinder. No attempt is made to deal with the effect on modern politics, first of the Triple Alliance, and next of the Russo-Turkish war, or to demonstrate what, in the speaker's opinion, was the true mode of dealing with it. The absurd assumption is made that the English Government created all the difficulties for the purpose of having them to cope with, so as to draw off attention from domestic affairs. One after the other, the Liberal orators of the recess recount their denunciations of this, that, and the other, in the settlement which all Europe has arrived at of the difficult and embarrassing position created by the recent war. Granted that difficulties survive the settlement, that its provisions are not all as successful as one or other of the signatory Powers might desire, is there any attempt made to show that as a settlement it is not accepted; that it does not provide within its four corners the principles which are to solve, and do solve, every difficulty that arises; that Russia is able to elude it; that France, Germany, and Austria have not all of them been determined to have it carried out and upheld for the future as the public law of Europe; that Great Britain herself is not, in consequence of that treaty, everywhere honoured abroad as the arbiter of European destiny, and the vindicator of European order and peace? It is precisely the same with regard to Afghanistan. It is assumed that we went there of our own freewill and pleasure, without any constraining motive on behalf of the public safety. It is easy enough to throw up the hat and point triumphantly to the un-

doubted fact that Sir Louis Cavagnari was brutally murdered. But no attempt whatever is made to show that if we had not moved, the Russians would not have established their mission at Cabul, and in time have menaced from behind the Indus the tranquillity of our whole Indian population. The perpetual reiteration of attacks of this kind works its own punishment. Men cannot run about the country denouncing every recent transaction in foreign affairs, as the result of caprice and folly, inevitably tending to national disaster, without eventually landing themselves or their followers in a definite proposition to undo such transactions at the first opportunity, and retrace every step which has been taken. Accordingly, we find that even Sir W. Harcourt's adroit orations have everywhere received that construction. The extravagant imputations of folly, wickedness, and desperate rashness to a particular course of conduct, inevitably lead sooner or later to a plain proposal to reverse it. There is Mr Chamberlain, for instance, the hot-headed and hot-tempered gentleman from Birmingham, already with his enthusiastic inexperience making himself the spokesman of thoughts which are the necessary but by no means the welcome result of Opposition invectives. This is the latest proposal of Birmingham political wisdom: "Amongst other things it would be their duty to undo as far as possible the mischievous policy of the present Government, and to repair the past, wherever reparation was practicable. He thought they could withdraw from their absurd and ridiculous undertaking to defend Asia Minor, give up the useless and absurd possession of Cyprus, and abandon the idea of maintaining a permanent Resident at Cabul. That was the policy which had

been sketched in the speeches of the Liberal leaders." Mr Chamberlain is quite right in this last sentence. That is, in literal truth, the only policy which has been so sketched. It is the logical result of their speeches and their unmeasured invectives. But whether or not they will thank Mr Chamberlain for stating that result in such singularly plain and uncompromising language is quite another matter. It is one thing to go to the country with a general and obscure charge of incompetence against an Administration which has already passed the average term of the duration of British Ministries, and quite another thing to submit to the country a definite proposal to reverse a policy which has been, with singular persistency of support, deliberately and for years pursued, and to withdraw from positions which are essential to that policy. Mr Chamberlain is perfectly right, that this latter proposal is implied in all the Opposition speeches of the recess, although the authors of those speeches doubtless read with dismay the maladroitness explicitness with which he has formulated the inevitable inferences. Hardly was the proposal reduced to definite terms than Mr Childers came forward to disavow it at Pontefract. But he may rest assured that his task, having regard to the way in which he endeavoured to accomplish it, is quite in vain. The rank and file of his party will draw the inevitable inference, that when he talks of the recent enormous and unnecessary increase to our responsibilities, the prudent and statesmanlike course is that those who regard them as unnecessary should do their best to get rid of them whenever the power and the opportunity arise. The prudent saving clause under which Mr Childers finds shelter will escape the notice

of ardent politicians like the men of Birmingham with Mr Chamberlain at their head, who do not understand unsparing denunciations followed by a timid acquiescence.

"Not that we of the Liberal party," says Mr Childers, "could either ignore or repudiate those responsibilities," however enormous or unnecessary they may be. Why not? The reason is hard to understand. "Mr Fox had resisted to the utmost the policy of the French war, but there was no more patriotic Foreign Minister than Mr Fox in the Government of All the Talents." In other words, so long as a Liberal statesman is patriotic in office, it matters not how unscrupulous he is in Opposition. And moreover, adds Mr Childers, with a charming *naïveté*, which shows how lame and impotent in reality is his repudiation of the desperate policy in which his colleagues have landed themselves, "we shall know how to apply our principles to what we may inherit, hard and difficult as the task may be." In other words, if the Liberals regain office, it will be an open question whether they should resolutely abandon or feebly maintain our recent acquisitions and engagements. It is by no means clear that that question will not seriously divide them even in Opposition. We have yet to hear what Lord Hartington and Mr Gladstone have got to say upon the subject. And Mr Childers at Knottingley was forced to admit that he had been taken to task by "more than one real friend," who had apparently called upon him to explain his partial repudiation of Mr Chamberlain's language. He accordingly did so:—

"I said that no Liberal statesman could ignore or repudiate responsibilities incurred by their predecessors with the approval of Parliament. Would I, I am asked, do my best, as

far as it could be done honourably, to extricate England from dangerous perplexities in which she had not been irretrievably involved? Of course I would concur in such a policy."

If all this does not betray divided counsels upon a subject which involves the honour of the Crown and the safety of the Empire, there is no meaning in words. It is the inevitable result of an obviously insincere agitation against our recent foreign policy. Before the Liberals can assume office, they must not merely have a majority large enough to set the Home Rulers at defiance, but they must make up their minds whether they will adhere to their Anti-national policy or consent to drop it as shortsighted and mischievous.

We feel tolerably confident that the country will spare them the necessity of making up their minds. A more despicable position for Britain to assume in the eyes of Europe and the world, than would be involved in the recall of those men to power, can scarcely be imagined. The course which this country has recently taken has been too decided, and fraught with consequences far too serious to ourselves and to other Powers, to admit of being either suddenly retraced or upheld in a wavering and uncertain spirit. The peace of Europe depends upon the maintenance of the Treaty of Berlin: Russia has honourably fulfilled it; and every Power which is anxious for peace avows its determination to abide by it. The spirit in which the Powers approach the settlement of Berlin is that expressed the other day by Baron Haymerle, the new Austrian Minister, to the representatives of his country abroad. "The Congress of Berlin has consecrated the good understanding amongst the Powers. To maintain this understanding—to consolidate the

political condition it has created in the East—to advance the pacification to the re-establishment of peace—to give security to industry and commerce,—appears to me one of the noblest tasks, and I deem it my first duty to labour to that end with all my power." That is the spirit in which England's allies co-operate in their combined undertaking. For England, the main author of that Treaty, the reconstructor of the peace and international rights of Europe, to recall to office men who have spent their whole energies in denouncing that Treaty—in vilifying its provisions and its authors, and in demonstrating that it is hostile to liberty, and favourable to the worst excesses of misgovernment—would be to sow the seeds of discord abroad, and to inspire the utmost distrust of English steadiness and good faith. To replace in office men who denounce the Anglo-Turkish Convention—who proclaim their wish and intention to withdraw from Cyprus—who are perpetually reiterating their belief that the recent forward movement in Afghanistan is unnecessary, and sure to be attended with military as well as political disasters,—would be tantamount to proclaiming to Russia, to Turkey, to every native power in Mesopotamia, Armenia, Central Asia, and India, that henceforth masterly inactivity will prevail, and that the energy which guards and commands the future is the exclusive characteristic of the Russian empire.

It is well that the country should be summoned to estimate fully the consequences of any such change in its policy, as it will be directly or indirectly invited by the Liberal party to enforce at the next election. The past may be left to take care of itself. Whether the Treaty of Berlin is only the Treaty of San Stefano in disguise, is an issue too ridiculous to discuss. If it be so,

why did the enthusiastic admirers of the San Stefano arrangement in this country denounce the stipulations at Berlin, and repeatedly predict their inevitable failure? Why do the Russian press and public, which exulted over the one, inveigh against the other as a national humiliation, and the reversal of their great military successes? Why do they vainly seek to revenge themselves upon Germany by an alliance with France? Why does Germany, in consequence, draw closer its alliance with Austria, in vindication of the arrangement made at Berlin? The history of the last eighteen months is the history of all Europe awakening to the perils of the Treaty of San Stefano, with its big Bulgaria, its Russian predominance over Constantinople, Adrianople, and Salonica, the *Ægean* Sea, and the Black Sea; and, under the guidance of Great Britain, resolving to cancel them once and for ever. England took the leading part in thrusting Russia back from the gates of Constantinople behind the Balkans; Austria stepped in and constituted herself the guardian of the Danube and the Balkans; and Germany is not behindhand in according to Austria her alliance and support. The critical moment in the great diplomatic struggle was the moment when Russia was called upon to decide whether she would face the consequences of a war with Great Britain or evacuate the dominions of the Sultan. At that crisis it is to the lasting honour of the British plenipotentiaries that they firmly adhered to a demand which the Treaty of Paris entitled them to make, and the vital interests of this country required them to enforce. Further than that, they had previously demonstrated, by their naval and military preparations, their determination that that demand should be complied with. Forethought and firmness saved

this country and Europe from the sanguinary consequences of a devastating war, which the slightest symptom of weakness or vacillation on the part of our plenipotentiaries would have rendered inevitable. The imperial accomplices in the Triple Alliance, however, themselves debarred from sharing in this resolute resistance, gladly welcomed its results, and cordially accept the Treaty of Berlin as cancelling all former agreements and understandings and combinations which the anarchical condition of Europe, during the eclipse of English influence, had rendered essential to their safety. There has rarely been a more striking instance of the disappearance of difficulties and dangers when manfully resisted. From the hour when Russia yielded, Europe rallied to the vindication of her treaties; and so long as this country firmly insists on the resettlement at Berlin being maintained inviolate, she will find herself supported by the Powers, and the tranquillity of the Continent preserved.

The burden of Sir W. Harcourt's speeches was, that the Treaty of Berlin had settled nothing, as he and others had all along predicted; that the whole thing was a sham and a delusion; and that the English Ministry is responsible for disturbances abroad and unnecessary expenditure at home. If there is any substantial truth in that view, it is well that it should lose nothing in the skill and vigour with which it is presented. The materials at hand were few and scanty, but it must be admitted that they had the advantage of being wrought up with considerable rhetorical skill, and without bitterness. We observe that less competent speakers, whilst recently addressing some Scotch audiences, have betrayed an amount of irritation and petty spite, which suggest that they should abandon

the public discussion of politics to more masculine minds. No doubt the task which they have undertaken requires the patience of Sisyphus himself. As soon as they have laboriously rolled the stone of their ponderous criticism uphill, a plain unadorned statement of conspicuous historical facts, of events of such magnitude that they cannot be more than temporarily obscured by the utmost efforts of party, dismisses it, to disappear in the abyss. The prolonged vituperation of the recess was answered by Lord Salisbury himself at Manchester—that great stronghold of Lancashire Conservatism, whose vast assemblage poured forth to express confidence in the Government, and to support the honour of the country. A mere statement of the plain facts of the case was all that was necessary. The Foreign Secretary simply took his own circular of 1st April 1878—the celebrated instrument of indictment against the provisions of San Stefano—and contrasted it, not with the Treaty of Berlin, which, it is said, is a sham, and whose failure was persistently predicted, but with what has been actually done under that Treaty and is now accomplished fact. Nothing can be plainer. There are the Russian terms after a successful war, the English objections to them, the complete abrogation of those terms, the unanimous determination of Europe to abide by the established settlement. Can any policy be more successful, or any statesmanship more triumphant? The Circular denounced certain provisions of the Treaty of San Stefano, and declared their combined effect to be intolerable,—that they placed Russia in a dominant position over Constantinople and the *Ægean* Sea, that they placed the Black Sea at her disposal, that they gave her the influence over the populations of Mesopotamia and Syria which be-

longed to the conqueror of the Armenian strongholds. Then what has been done under the treaties which have been so long vilified? What are those accomplished facts which the Liberal party is anxious to undo, or to feebly maintain, or, in Mr Childers's language, "apply their own principles to, hard and difficult as the task may be." In the first place, all the provisions which secured to Russia a predominance over Constantinople and the *Ægean* were swept away. The big Bulgaria, the vast Slav province which stretched from the Danube to the *Ægean*, from the Adriatic to the Black Sea, and which cut Constantinople off from the dominion of the Sultan, and isolated it in a cabbage-garden, has been abolished; and in lieu of it Bulgaria consists of a province lying between the Danube and the Balkans. The line of the Balkans has been restored to Turkey, and Russia has been thrust back alike from the three seas, from the Straits, and from Constantinople. And that is not all. Not merely has Russia been thrust back and a strong military frontier restored to the Sultan, whenever he chooses to occupy it, but Austria has been placed as a sentinel at the very door of the Turkish empire, and her national existence, reputation, and power in Europe are all staked upon a successful resistance to any future Russian aggression. If animosity to the Turk and hatred of his misgovernment had really lain at the bottom of all this vituperation of our recent foreign policy, and not merely animosity to the Ministry and a party hatred of all their successes, the Opposition might have seen in this achievement not merely a security that the provisions for reformed government of the provinces would not be allowed to become waste-paper, but that the Turk himself, since his defeat in

the recent war, and the consequent development of Austrian dominion, is no longer so essential as he once was to the peace and security of Europe. His heirs or residuary legatees are increasing in power and importance, and the long trial of statesmanship will ultimately result in a resettlement of his European dominions, without that overpowering predominance of Russia which all statesmen and nations have agreed to deprecate and withstand. Events, moreover, are obviously tending to a defensive alliance between Germany and Austria, than which nothing would be more in accordance with the Treaty of Berlin, the interests of England, and the peace of Europe. So far from that Treaty having been a sham and a failure, it would seem that a tide of good fortune had set in,—that fortune which always attends those who dare successfully,—and that with Russian retreat before British firmness at Berlin had vanished not merely the provisions of San Stefano, but all serious international difficulties, for all time, as regards the European dominions of the Sultan.

"If you ask us," says Lord Salisbury, "how we have discharged our stewardship, I will ask you in return to compare the state of affairs with what it was on the morning that the Treaty of San Stefano was signed. Look at the military position of Russia then and now; look at the territorial position of Turkey then and now; look at the sympathies expressed by Austria, and still more by Germany,—and I think you will acknowledge that, as far as her Majesty's Government have had any share in the shaping of these events, an adequate guard has been provided for the interests and the position which it was their duty to protect."

In the second place, the provisions which placed the Black Sea at the disposal of Russia have been

swept away. The European coast, including the harbour of Bourgas, has been handed back to Turkey; on the Asiatic coast the harbour of Batoum has been declared to be a commercial harbour. In the third place, steps have been taken to counteract the influence which Russia had established in Asiatic Turkey through her conquest, by the convention which renewed to Turkey the guarantee of her Asiatic frontier, which had formerly been included in the Tripartite Treaty with France and Austria, and by the military occupation of Cyprus. If the result of the Turkish defeats has been, through the recent successful diplomacy, to strengthen the barriers against Russian aggression in Europe, it has, at all events, increased the necessity for precautionary measures in Asia; and those measures, whether in Asia Minor or in Afghanistan, have been deliberately adopted with the loudly-expressed approval both of Parliament and the country, and can never be withdrawn or abandoned. The outcry which has been raised in regard to Afghanistan by the partisans of "masterly inactivity" did not influence the public mind in the slightest degree the moment that the real facts of the case were divulged. "If we predicted," says Sir William Harcourt, "that to send an envoy to Cabul would produce disaster, and that disaster has occurred," what a wonderful proof of our political forethought and wisdom! There is not a single disaster, from a rout before Ali Musjid up to a general insurrection of all Indian races, which has not been predicted; and from the unbroken successes which led to the Treaty of Gandamak, down to the triumphant capture of Cabul, there is not a solitary instance of predictions fulfilled, except the unhappy murder of Sir Louis Cavagnari and

his suite. That unfortunate massacre has been too speedily avenged to serve the purpose of Opposition; and the Bulgarian massacres may serve as a warning that hysterics have no permanent influence on English policy. The broad and sole justification for recent interference in Afghanistan was its inevitable necessity. If it could have been safely avoided, it ought to and would have been avoided. Our frontier was declared by the highest military authorities to be insecure; the mountain-passes were in the hands of the Affghans. So long as we had only to deal with endless fighting tribes unconnected with any great Power, that frontier was sufficient, however much it might entail endless and expensive expeditions against our border enemies. But when Russia advanced to Khiva and the Caspian; when Shere Ali, besides exhibiting a sulky hostility, not merely refused our embassy, but received the emissaries of Russia, whose intrigues were going on not merely to establish Russian predominance at Cabul, but to give to Russia the control over these passes, and a position of advantage for purposes of invasion and intrigue,—stern and unavoidable necessity compelled and justified a forward movement. It is difficult to believe that that forward movement would have been forcibly resisted but for a misplaced reliance upon Russian assistance. Shere Ali drifted into war under the belief that the strong diplomatic hostility then existing between England and Russia in Europe would inevitably lead to a rupture.

Prudence suggested that this movement should have been made in 1875; but Lord Northbrook and the policy of "masterly inactivity" prevailed. In 1878 there was no alternative but to effect it at all risks, when, as the 'Edinburgh Re-

view' itself reminds us, "preparations were made by the Russians for the advance of 15,000 men in three columns across the Oxus, besides a column of 4000 men destined to occupy Merv and the Akhal country. These military movements were going on at the time when the Treaty of Berlin was signed." The presence of a Russian mission at Cabul, in addition to these preparations, was a marked expression of conjoint Affghan and Russian hostility; and the Government would have deserved impeachment if they had folded their hands and done nothing. It is in vain to say that a vista of difficulties opens before us. The great Eastern Question can never be stirred to its depths in both continents without raising difficulties, and all that the country can require of its Ministers is, that they should be met with prudence and courage. Hitherto those difficulties have been surmounted with unexampled success. Peace has been restored to Europe, with ample guarantees for its continuance. No adverse critic can stand for a moment who will undertake, without evasion or artifice, to compare the combined effects of the provisions of San Stefano with the combined effects of those of Berlin. In Affghanistan the Treaty of Gandamak secures to us all that is required for the preservation of our power, and enables us to dominate over a nation which must in time learn that England will not tolerate on its very borders either covert hostility or open defiance.

It is impossible but that the next elections should turn largely upon the question of foreign policy. Mr Childers, and all prudent Liberals, no doubt, are anxious that they should merely turn upon what shall

be the policy of the next six or seven years rather than upon criticisms of the past. But in the first place, the Opposition have no question on which they can unite to lay before the country; and they have aroused an extraordinary amount of party feeling upon the very subject whose discussion they are now anxious to shirk. They cannot escape from the deplorable position in which they have placed themselves. They must ask the constituencies to denounce a Government for successfully vindicating the very treaties which they themselves made when they were in office; for having peacefully offered a more effective resistance to Russia than they themselves were able to accomplish by a sanguinary and unnecessary war; and for securing, in lieu of the ill-concealed jealousies which undermined the Treaty of Paris, a unanimity of European support which bids fair to render the Treaty of Berlin a durable monument of statesmanship. They must continue to denounce a great European settlement which every one feels must in honour be scrupulously observed, which stands as a guarantee against a general war, and which this country especially, after all that has passed during the last four years, could never permit to be subverted without open humiliation. The honour of the Crown, the safety of the Empire, English character abroad, are all staked on the successful maintenance of the Treaty of Berlin and its contemporaneous settlements; and it is the policy of which they represent the triumph that the constituencies are to be asked to condemn, whilst the Liberals quarrel amongst themselves as to whether that policy should be feebly maintained or resolutely reversed.

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THEATRICAL REFORM: THE "MERCHANT OF VENICE" AT THE LYCEUM.

A NATIONAL theatre! Much has of late been written about one; but have the writers formed to themselves any clear idea of what they mean by the phrase? A national drama one can quite understand as a drama that embodies the life, the character, the manners of a nation, —its modes of thought and feeling. Our own roll of dramatists, with Shakespeare at one end, and the small knot of living writers for the stage who are not adapters from the French or German, at the other, have given us a very voluminous and interesting national drama. It is true that, for all the practical purposes of the stage, the great body of this drama is dead, and that it retains its interest only for the literary student, or him who seeks to form for himself a vivid picture of the "age and body" of the various periods of our social history, which, in a certain sense, they reflect. But it is this body of dramatic literature which one understands by a national drama; and in so far as this is concerned, England can quite hold her own against

France, Germany, or Spain, where, as with ourselves, the great part of what constitutes their national drama is antiquated, and out of tone with modern life, and no longer, therefore, available for the stage.

But how as to a national theatre? One would imagine, by much that is written and spoken, that in this respect these countries are better off than ourselves. But is it so? Which of them has a national theatre? Excellent theatres, with excellent companies, they have in many places. But in what metropolitan city exists a theatre that deserves the name of national—that is, a theatre which is recognised as holding within its ranks the best of what the nation has to show in histrionic art, and employing that best in the performance of dramas of the highest order? Vienna, Berlin, Dresden, Munich, Paris, all have theatres that are so far, and only so far, national, that they are partially supported by State subventions. So, too, have Meiningen, Gotha, Weimar, Mannheim, and many other places. The Continental sov-

ereigns have always had a pride in maintaining a theatre in connection with their Courts, and these theatres occupy the place that was formerly occupied by our own patent theatres. In conventional phrase, our metropolitan patent theatres used to be called national theatres. But they never were national institutions in the sense that the National Gallery, or the British Museum, or the South Kensington Museum are national institutions, having always depended for support upon the special public that visited them, and been liable to the fluctuations in fortune necessarily incident to such precarious patronage. It is no doubt true that, so long as they possessed the exclusive privilege of acting the higher drama, they drew to themselves, as it was natural they should, all the most gifted and accomplished actors of their time ; and they thus became typical representatives of the best national acting. But when this exclusive privilege was taken from them, they lost that character ; and with the abolition of the privilege vanished the possibility of maintaining in England what could, in any true sense of the word, be called a national theatre.

It were well that this fact should be at once recognised, and that attention should be concentrated on the best mode of obtaining the practical equivalent for a theatre or theatres in the metropolis, such as it had when its three leading theatres—Covent Garden, Drury Lane, and the Haymarket—were at their best. If money alone could effect this object, money would not be wanting. But money in itself is powerless. Money can buy pictures, statues, porcelain ; it can make the fortune of individual artists ; it can foster, and does foster, a very great deal of bad art-work. It might even secure—although of

that who does not despair?—a comfortable theatre, and it certainly could provide stage appointments in perfection. But it can neither produce good actors, nor bring together such good actors as exist, and make them work harmoniously in perfecting the performance of good plays. But this is just the one thing which that section of the public wants which loves the drama, but cannot be satisfied with what most of the existing theatres have to offer.

Can this want be supplied ? The question is a wide one—much wider than appears at first sight—and the answer to it involves many considerations, to deal with which would carry us much too far. That it can be had soon, or by any royal road, such as the endowment of a theatre, seems to be quite out of the question.

Let us suppose any amount of money subscribed for the purpose, and an excellent theatre, excellently appointed, available : the question then arises, Who is to organise and control the company ; or rather, first of all, how is that company to be obtained ?

It must be remembered that the number of theatres in the kingdom is so great, that it is a matter of no small difficulty for those who conduct them to get hold of even one or two actors and actresses of ability to give some sort of backbone to their company. The consequence is, that people who ought to be in the lower ranks of the actor's profession are occupying the higher ; and many, very many, pretend to positions of importance who have not one quality by nature or by training to justify their being on the stage at all. The demand for actors being thus far in excess of the supply, the competition for those who do excel is extreme ; and the salaries and other conditions at which their services are obtained

are such as never entered the wildest dreams of the greatest actors and actresses of former days. What results from this? Why, that even supposing actors of this class could be bribed away for our ideal theatre from their existing engagements, a fresh difficulty has to be encountered in filling up the company with actors and actresses of the second and third ranks. This can only be done by draining many theatres of their chief attraction. But, apart from the fact that very great numbers of performers of a lower grade are already spoiled by undue promotion, it is only too probable that not even a great increase of salaries would induce them to fall into the subordinate ranks. Nor is this greatly to be wondered at. How few are the actors of our present stage whose pre-eminence is so undoubted that their fellows should accept them without question as their superiors? And how much fewer are those who possess the true artistic spirit, which can find in minor parts such points of individuality that they will accept them cheerfully, and trust to their treatment of them for obtaining a sympathetic recognition from their audience? And yet unless they will do this, how is that completeness of *ensemble*—that atmosphere of general excellence,—that harmony of tone—to be arrived at, which is the great desideratum of the English stage, while it is the chief distinction of the much-lauded company of the *Comédie Française*? Indeed what but this is it that, in the marked absence from the ranks of that company of anything like genius, gives so much attraction to performances, very often grievously wanting in the freshness and individuality, which are to be found in the actors of our own stage, imperfect as in other respects they may be?

This being the state of the theat-

rical profession, no possible combination of reasonably good actors, such as would give distinction to a theatre, could, we are satisfied, be got together within any reasonable period. But there is yet another difficulty. Where is the man to be found capable of infusing the higher art-spirit into such a company, and of subordinating to it the many tempers and caprices, the vanities and susceptibilities, of which actors and actresses have, of course, a larger share than the members of professions who are less in the public eye, and less dependent on the immediate recognition of such powers as they possess, or think they possess? Besides the qualities just indicated, such a man must be no novice in the affairs of a theatre: he must have the tact and instinct to humour and yet to guide the public taste; he must know good acting, and be quick to discern the germs of undeveloped power, so as from time to time to recruit the forces of his theatre; he must be swayed by no undue partialities; his knowledge, taste, and character must be such as to command the respect of his company; and, if he has been an actor, he must cease to act. Over and above all, he must so manage his establishment as to make it pay; for the most enthusiastic will tire of supporting a theatre, which, by its non-success, pretty clearly proves that it does not meet any public want. If such a piece of perfection as a director of the kind we have imagined is to be found, he must combine with his other qualities an amount of courage and vigour for the enterprise, to which all who have had any practical experience of theatres must bow with awe. The manager of no theatre sleeps on roses; a bed of thorns would be a couch of down compared to the bed on which the manager of such a theatre must lie.

Not having ourselves any belief in the existence of such a paragon, or in the success of any attempt to set up, by any summary process, the ideal theatre, after which we nevertheless yearn as fondly as the warmest enthusiasts for a so-called national theatre, to what, it may be asked, do we look for the setting up of a theatre worthy of the country of Shakespeare? Our answer is: The growth of such a theatre, to be sound and permanent, must be organic, and therefore gradual. To attempt to force it must result in failure. It will demand the co-operation of actors and of public,—actors, with the ambition to belong to such a theatre, and prepared to make sacrifices to gratify that ambition—and a public capable of appreciating their endeavours, and not too impatient because they do not get general excellence all at once.

If the higher branches of the actor's art have fallen into decay, let it not be thought that the public are free from blame. They have for many years asked for dramatic entertainments of a not very elevated kind, and they have got them. When, now, they cry out, because the power of impersonating ideal characters, of expressing noble passion, of speaking blank verse, or giving due emphasis to fine prose, has all but passed away, they should remember to what they have during these years chiefly given encouragement. Has it not been, as a rule, to pieces flimsy in structure, poor in diction, commonplace in incident and character,—in which anything like elevation of style or high-bred grace in woman, or chivalry of thought or deportment in men, would have been out of place, and where a languid and slipshod manner of speech was held to be appropriate to such feeble passion as the actor was ever called upon to dis-

play? Is it to be wondered at after many years of this sort of thing, and the utter ruin to actors as artists which results from having to play the same piece night after night through months, sometimes years, that the want should be felt of that higher power of conception, of action, and of speech which are required for the poetical drama, or for comedy founded upon human character, and not upon the caricatures of men and women, and the impossible incidents of the majority of our modern pieces?

“The drama's laws the drama's patrons
give,
For they that live to please must please
to live,

has always been, and always will be, true. A theatre is, after all, only a great commercial venture. It must either hit the public taste, or be shut up. The public, for the last twenty years or so, has got what suited its taste, and now an important section of it wants to get something better. But that something better is not to be had merely for the asking. All art is long, and the actor's art is certainly no exception to the rule. Fine natural gifts for it are exceptionally rare, for they are of the body as well as of the mind. The finest conceptions, without the physical qualities of person, of feature, and of voice, are of no use; and the command of these qualities, so as to give life to these conceptions, is only to be obtained by reiterated practice upon the actual stage. The schooling of masters can go but a little way. Articulate and careful speech, the power to use the limbs freely and simply, avoidance of all that is slovenly and ungainly in motion or deportment,—all of them things which every lady and gentleman ought to regard, but which, unhappily, they do not regard as essentials

of their education,—are in a special degree necessary for the stage. But even where these qualities exist, the freedom and certainty of execution, the annihilation of self-consciousness, which excellence on the stage demands, are only to be attained by actual exercise of the art. Unhappily the practical schools of former days—the theatres of Bath, York, Dublin, Edinburgh, and others—no longer fulfil that office; for they have ceased to have what is called stock companies. The vile system which now prevails in provincial theatres of trusting to companies, travelling with one or more special pieces, has made the acquirement of ease and self-command, and of variety of expression, in the regular work of an established company, all but impossible for a young actor or actress.

But this state of things, and the essentially unpoetical character of the plays which have of late years chiefly possessed our theatres, together with the great encouragement which has been given to female members of the profession, to whom the honest earnings of a laborious vocation are of secondary importance, has had a no less injurious effect upon the stage as a profession. It has kept out of it many a man, and, still more, many a woman, not without the qualities for the art, whose self-respect would not permit them to pursue a career in which anything short of the success which genius can enforce has to be sought under the greatest difficulties and the most unpleasant conditions. It will take time, and the existence of a higher tone both on and off the stage, before the best class of recruits can be induced to enter the ranks. But the obvious signs that the public demand a better style of entertainment, and a higher level of acting, can scarcely fail to have an effect upon some at least

of the metropolitan managers. In their own interests they will be glad to give openings to plays of a higher order, and to performers with the intelligence and the breeding which are essential for the interpretation of such plays. For the two things must go together. The written and the acted drama always have been, and always will be, much upon the same level. When good plays, well acted, fill the manager's exchequer, the public will get them, but not till then.

It is, therefore, not to any spasmodic attempt to set up a special theatre that we look for the improvement which is now so loudly called for, but to a skilful use of one or two existing metropolitan theatres, the managers of which shall address themselves to bringing together the best available materials for the performance of pieces of a class suited to the size of the theatre and the abilities of their company. Mr Hare, Mr Bancroft, and Mr Irving, for example, have found this system answer; and they have now got so firm a hold upon the public, that further experiments in the same direction in their hands are all but certain to succeed. They can each of them give to actors of promise the opportunities of practice and of rising in their profession which are so important to the novice. They have it in their power to make it an actor's ambition to belong to their theatres, as it was the ambition of the fine actors of former generations to belong to Covent Garden, Drury Lane, or the Haymarket. Let a fair field be but given for that ambition, and no question but it will bring back something of the old spirit which made position and reputation, and the delight of practising his art under favourable conditions, outweigh in the actor's mind the mere question of salary. How that spirit

worked is to be gathered from the *Memoirs of Macready*, which tell us that actors and actresses of assured eminence accepted salaries much below what they could have obtained elsewhere, in order that they might help in the establishment of a theatre worthy of their art.

The public of the present day seems to be only too ready to second any effort of this kind ; for, having practically no guidance from the press, and having all but lost its own critical faculty from want of standards to direct its judgment, it gives to talent of but moderate proportions the admiration and applause which should be reserved for genius. It was no less than pitiable, for example, to see how people, who profess to be learned in matters of art, went mad over the feeble performances last summer of *Mdlle. Sarah Bernhardt*. Surely it was not necessary to have seen great actresses to make one indisposed to recognise in that lady the qualities which go to make them. Without the power to feel more deeply and to think more nobly than ordinary mortals, actresses can never be great. They may not be able to write poetry, or even to put what they think and feel into plain prose—that is a special faculty. But they must have the intuitions, the imaginative sympathies, of poets, otherwise they cannot live into, and look and be, the beings whom the imagination of poets has created. Their own lives, their own aspirations and habits of thought, must be congenial with those of the heroines they have to impersonate, or how will they command the looks, the movements that are to satisfy the eye, or still more the inflections of voice that are to thrill the heart, but which cannot move unless they vibrate from the inner depths of the speaker's soul? *Spenser's* words are as true as they are beautiful—

“Yes, of the soul the body form doth
take,
For soul is form, and doth the body
make.”

Who that knows what the lady we have spoken of is—and unhappily the incidents of her life have been too liberally trumpeted—will venture to expect in her the “*ethereal qualities that touch the heart*,” the power of impersonating woman in her highest and most heroic aspects, as the outcome of such a nature and such a life?

But to descend from this higher ground to the lower level of mere physical attributes, where in her are those qualities of person, the unstudied grace of motion which belongs only to a symmetrical and finely-poised frame; the plastic features to reveal the working of thoughts and emotions as they rise; the resonant voice, which can be drawn upon at will to express every varying shade of feeling, from the most winning tenderness to the wildest bursts of passion! These are the requisites without which no actress can be entitled to claim rank with those who have made the stage illustrious. Where are they to be found in the meagre form, the hard immobile face, the voice of a few notes, of *Mdlle. Bernhardt*? We speak not of the other qualities to be found in a great actress—the utterance which seems to grow out of the thought or emotion of the moment; the absorption of self in the woman sought to be portrayed, so that not for an instant are we allowed to think of the actress as apart from her; the unstudied effects of gesture and motion which come with the impulse of the scene. Where these are not—and assuredly they are not to be found in the monotones and carefully studied poses of *Mdlle. Sarah Bernhardt*—we decline to bow down and worship

genius in what is no more than a practised cleverness, an aptitude for picturesque effect within a limited range, and a command of the ordinary resources of art, so far as art can be taught.

Will those who wrote so fervently of Mdle. Bernhardt's genius imagine to themselves what she would make of any of Shakespeare's heroines?—of Constance, of Lady Macbeth, of Juliet, of Beatrice, of Portia? How far would her powers carry her towards presenting any one of these ideal yet most real women, with all they ask for of subtle development of character, of exquisitely modulated speech, of ebb and flow of passion, and of high physical requisites, to impress the eye and the imagination of those who know their Shakespeare? Grant that the lady can play on a few chords of the heart; still they are few, and she can strike them but feebly. Let us remember that we have had, and may again hope to have, actresses to satisfy the heart and the imagination in their personations of Shakespeare's women; let us remember what a range of power goes to that achievement; and, so remembering, let us refuse to join in that foolish cry of admiration by which not a few, who might have been expected to know better, made themselves ridiculous, and brought upon English theatrical criticism the contempt of the French themselves.

It will go hard if the same tendency to overpraise some of our own performers do not spoil them for rising to greater heights in their art. When people are continually being told that everything they do is perfect, they must have a virtue more than mortal if they do not slacken that struggle after perfection which is the very life of all art. It is only genius of the highest order which is not to be

so spoiled; for it alone knows the ideal at which it aims, and how far short of that ideal its very happiest efforts fall. To the artist truly worthy of the name, on the stage as in the studio, the work he has to do is always of more account than the opinion of the world as to how he has succeeded. The actress who can worthily play Juliet, or Imogen, or Rosalind, will never rest satisfied with her own achievements, but will go on to the end of her days finding fresh traits of character, fresh shades of feeling, fresh impulses of passion, fresh subtleties of tone or expression to be developed. There will be nothing stereotyped in her performances; and they will be always fresh, because to her the beings whom she has to embody are living realities, and, like all noble women, have in them a "something that never can be wholly known." Of the great actor in the great parts of Shakespeare this will be no less true. Thus it was that Garrick never played one of them down to the time he left the stage without making a fresh study of it. Thus, too, it was that it could be said of his Hamlet, when he was over sixty, that not only had it more of the fire and elasticity of youth than the Hamlet of any other actor, but that it was in itself the very "young Lord Hamlet" of the poet's fancy. Greedy as Garrick was of praise—and, if we are to believe Goldsmith, "who peppered the highest was surest to please"—praise never made him relax his study, or trifle with his work, or less zealous to improve it to the highest pitch.

But artists of this class must always be rare—"as rare as phoenix." Those whom excessive praise will spoil will ever be in the majority. And if it be bad for them, it is not less bad for the public also; for in

matters of art mankind are of a sheep-like nature, and ready to follow bold and self-asserting leaders, however their natural instincts may fill them with misgivings that the road they are being led is not altogether the right one. Somewhat more of reserve, of moderation of tone, in speaking of the leading popular favourites of the day would certainly do them no harm ; while, if pains were taken by critics to temper with judgment the enthusiasm of too admiring audiences, and lead them to ask for reasons from themselves for the faith that is in them, that wholesome reaction from the front of the proscenium upon those behind it would in time be established, which actors need for guidance as well as for encouragement. When critics, trained to their art, shall speak boldly out,—when audiences shall get into the habit of thinking for themselves, and of using their own common-sense and wholesome natural feeling in judging of acting,—actors will soon find this out, and many a rampant vice of vulgarity, and staginess, and vicious conventionality will disappear from the stage.

The recent production of "*The Merchant of Venice*" at the Lyceum is another of Mr Irving's hopeful efforts towards the improvement of the general level of stage representation. To say that it is wholly satisfactory is impossible ; for with the best intentions on Mr Irving's part, the means for such a representation are not within his reach.

This play has suffered sorely in stage treatment since the days of Shakespeare. Nay, even in his own time he could never have seen his conception carried out ; for, to go no further, where was to be seen, in any performance of his day, "the counterfeit presentment" of his Portia—that Portia in which his genius has portrayed the very ideal

of a woman, in whom the highest culture is combined with the highest qualities of heart, and the refinement of the highest breeding ? The play early dropped out of the list of acting plays ; and when it was restored to the stage in 1701, it was so mangled by Lord Lansdowne's recast of it that it was Shakespeare's in little more than name. Shylock became a subject for mirth under the treatment of Doggett, the low comedian ; and Portia, who is the ruling spirit of the play, almost as completely as Rosalind is the ruling spirit of "*As You Like It*," passed into the hands of the comic lady of the theatre, and her heroic rescue of her husband's friend from the deadly clutch of the Jew came to be treated as a kind of joke. Even when Macklin brought back the original play to Covent Garden stage in 1741, divested of the miserable frippery with which Lord Lansdowne had degraded it, who was his Portia ? No other than Kitty Clive, the merriest, the most buxom, the most hard-hitting of comic actresses—the matchless Nell of "*The Devil to Pay*," and Fine Lady of "*Lethe*." She played the part in Garrick's company, and the tradition that it was by right the privilege of the light comedy lady of the theatre long lingered on the stage. It is not very long since we have seen Mrs Charles Kean, so far infected by the prevailing tradition, so little studied in the Portia whom Shakespeare drew, that she made her exit after the trial scene, tucking her arms under the back of her doctor's gown, and tripping with the affected gait of the Old Bailey barrister of the stage. We have fortunately got beyond the point when such a feat could be executed with impunity.

Shakespeare's plays, when they are studied at all, are now studied as a whole, and not with reference

to single characters, or favourite passages merely. It will be necessary for the manager of the future to bear this well in mind. And here let us note by the way that the spectacle which most theatres present in these days during a Shakespearian performance, of numbers of people conning the book, as though it were the libretto of an opera, instead of following the business of the scene, says but little for their education. Shame to the full-grown English man or woman who does not blush to make such open avowal of an unpardonable ignorance! Let us hope that the day is not far distant when such an exhibition will be impossible. But even now in every theatre there are many—and their numbers are increasing—who have fairly mastered the play as a whole, and who expect to see its general scope and object clearly indicated, at least, if not fully worked out. In the "Merchant of Venice" of the Lyceum their demands will, as we have said, meet with only a partial satisfaction.

In scenery, appointments, and in stage arrangements every reasonable wish is fulfilled. The local colouring is well preserved, and a fine framework and background provided for the figures of the picture. Venice, with its noble architecture, its busy port, its ruffling gallants, its stately halls, is well suggested. Nor can a fairer Belmont, both within and without, be desired for the "lady richly left," who is its owner, and "of such wondrous virtues" that they outvie her wealth. The eye is pleasantly regaled, but not distracted by the scenic accessories. So far all is well. The same may be said of the costumes, which are well studied in contrasts of colour, true to the period, and handsome.

But have the characters of the

play been equally well studied and made out? Passing for the moment over Shylock and Portia, what is to be said of the Antonio, Bassanio, Gratiano, Salanio, and Salarino, the Nerissa and the Jessica?

Antonio, the Merchant, who gives his name to the play, and who is a character of really first importance, is reduced by the actor to an insignificance which disturbs the balance of the drama. Let us consider for one moment what Antonio is, as Shakespeare drew him. The words which begin the play are spoken by him, and in them he strikes the first note of the not too sad minor key which ever and anon is heard in a faint undertone throughout it. He is kept prominently in view all through the play, and becomes an important feature at its close. In fact, his fortunes are the pivot on which the play turns, and therefore is it called the "Merchant of Venice." It is his generous friendship which enables Bassanio to try his fortune at Belmont; it is the peril at which he does this act of affection which creates the main interest of the piece, and brings out the distinctive qualities of its two most important characters, Shylock and Portia. He, the great and honoured Christian merchant, is the contrast and foil to the oppressed and rancorous Jewish money-broker. It is the knowledge of what a friend he is that makes Portia face the task, from which her natural timidity would have shrunk—

"The kindest man,
The best conditioned; an unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies;"—

and the very last things Portia says show us, that in helping his friend to win her, he will not, as he feared he might, lose that friend for himself. In the man there is a dignity which, coupled as it is

with a large and kindly heart, wins him the mingled affection and respect of the young Venetian nobles by whom he is surrounded. See how Salanio speaks of him in the speech beginning

"A kinder gentleman treads not the earth,"

where the parting from Bassanio, and the pang it cost him, are described ;

"His eye being big with tears,
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
And, with affection wondrous sensible,
He wrung Bassanio's hand, and so they parted."

Observe Salarino's rejoinder — "I think he only loves the world for him," and his call to his friends to join him in trying to beguile the heaviness of the now solitary Merchant. Again, Portia's words tell us how Shakespeare would have us think of Antonio, when she rates him as worthy to be the peer of her Bassanio—

"For in companions,
That do converse and waste the time together,
There needs must be some like complexion
Of lineaments, of manners, and of spirit."

In all ways, therefore, Antonio is a personage of primary importance. So far from this, however, the Antonio of the Lyceum is from first to last presented in a manner so feeble, so commonplace, that he seems as little fitted to be the object of Shylock's "lodged hate," as of the love and respect which he commands from every other person of mark in the play.

In citing, as we have done, two brief passages of what is spoken by Salanio and Salarino, enough has been cited to show that they are not the skipping feather-brained fops who are presented to us at the Lyceum,—gentlemen, who run off their words at a gallop, as if they

were acting in a farce, and who seem to think that rushing to and fro upon the stage is the legitimate mode of expressing the vivacity of high-bred Venetian gentlemen. What would have been thought of them in Venice, if they had borne themselves in this fashion on the open streets? There is not one of them that is not a man of breeding as well as of brains. Gay, bright-witted gentlemen they are, with youth and health and fine spirits. But they are gentlemen; and what each of them says is marked by distinct character, and shows him to be a man who both thinks and observes well and closely in a fashion of his own. The Salanio, the Salarino, and the Lorenzo of the Lyceum, on the contrary, are all of the same type, "as like one another as half-pence are," a sort of weak Gratianos—anything, in a word, but persons to whom a man of Antonio's staid and thoughtful character would have said, "Your worth is very dear in my regard." Only the Lorenzo (Mr N. Forbes) aims at giving significance and emphasis to his part; but even he does not do so until we see him in the famous moonlight scene of the fifth act. Up to that point he is, like the rest, little better than a well-dressed fop.

Gratiano is an ungracious part at the best, and requires from the actor a high-bred and airy grace to carry off his frivolity without annoyance to the audience. Still, there must have been a charm about the fellow, else Bassanio, who hits off his character in a sentence, as "speaking an infinite deal of nothing more than any man in Venice," would never have taken him with him when he went to Belmont, or when he returned thence to Venice on his sad errand to Antonio. But he has the fault of many excellent fellows of not knowing when to hold his tongue; and when he

carries this vice into the court of Venice, and baits the Jew with ill-timed banter, we are apt to lose patience, and to share Shylock's contempt for his wits. A skilful actor will therefore take care to keep Gratiano's "skipping spirit" well toned down. This seems to be felt by Mr F. Cooper, the Gratiano of the Lyceum; and except that in his performance the tone and quality of a high-bred gentleman are not sufficiently suggested and maintained, it is upon the whole not unsatisfactory.

Why Jessica and Nerissa should have been regarded as of so little importance as to be intrusted to two young ladies, who would be weak in the smallest of comediettas, one is at a loss to conceive. In the case of Nerissa it is inexcusable, for Nerissa is the companion of Portia. She is not the lady's maid, but the lady-in-waiting, with whom the great Italian heiress makes free interchange of her thoughts; and much of the impression which Portia has to make in her first scene depends upon the way Nerissa's portion of the dialogue is maintained. It is not to the insipid undeveloped girl into which Nerissa is turned at the Lyceum, that Portia would hold discourse of her lovers in a strain so intellectual and so brilliant; neither would such a Nerissa venture to remind her friend of the Venetian, "a scholar and a soldier, who came hither in the company of the Marquis of Montferrat," as being "of all the men that ever her foolish eyes looked upon, the best deserving a fair lady." On the way this is done depends much of the effect of Portia's rejoinder: "I remember him well; and I remember him worthy of thy praise," which should be given, but is not given by Miss Ellen Terry, in a way to let it be seen that Bassanio

was no braggart in telling Antonio, in a previous scene, that "sometimes from her eyes he did receive fair speechless messages." As little would such a Nerissa be chosen by Portia to aid her in her enterprise at Venice. If this be a specimen of the way the demand is to be met for completeness and *ensemble* in the production of Shakespeare, much good advice has been thrown away in vain. To degrade Nerissa to the level of a *soubrette* is to lower Portia. She wisely judged men by their friends, and the audience insensibly judges of Portia by the same rule. It would have been impossible for the real Portia to have had a Nerissa who did not show some "like complexion" to herself "in manners and in spirit." But, indeed, it would be idle to dwell upon the want of judgment which could place a character of this importance in such hands.

Of the Portia we find it impossible to speak in the terms of unqualified rapture with which Miss Ellen Terry's performance has generally been greeted. We place our ideas of Portia high,—not higher, however, than Shakespeare meant them to be placed, by speaking of her as

"Nothing undervalued

To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia,"

by the elaborate care with which he has depicted the impression she produced on all around her, and by the way he has developed her charms of heart and mind throughout the action of the piece. She is the ideal of the high-born woman, gloriously endowed in body and in mind, and with her intellect cultivated to the highest point to which female culture could be brought. Only such a woman could have carried out the task which her old friend Bellario's illness forced upon her, preventing him, as it did, from

obeying the Doge's summons, and coming to Venice to determine the question at issue between Antonio and Shylock. It is with the knowledge, and upon the express recommendation of the great jurisconsult, that she takes his place. He knew that he could safely trust her to make a sound exposition of the points on which to rely for the discomfiture of the Jew. For observe, his own reputation was at stake, and any break-down on Portia's part would have compromised his character fatally with the Doge. But she had, as he well knew, the knowledge and the "undaunted mettle" to carry her through an enterprise to which she was prompted, not merely by love, but by humanity. She had the higher power, which enabled her to use the knowledge in her own way, and the noble forbearance of the Christian woman, to keep in the background her weapon for discomfiting the Jew, until she had found that every appeal either to his heart or to his avarice was of no avail.

It is in the trial scene that the character of Portia culminates. Her appearance there may surprise us; but the actress should previously have made us feel that she is equal to what she has undertaken. It is the splendid development of the splendid qualities of heart and mind, with which all we have previously heard and seen of her have made us familiar. Severe as the ordeal is to which she is exposed, the noble gravity and self-command with which she bears herself throughout the scene, should seem but a natural phase of her strong and beautiful nature. Most subtly, too, the womanly element

breathes throughout her treatment of the situation, even while her penetrating look and intellectual vigour hold the Jew firmly in her grasp. She proves him, step by step, to see if he be indeed the wretch "void of any drachm of mercy" she has been told he is; and leads him on to an avowal of the malice which nothing short of Antonio's death will appease. From that point she has him at her mercy; and, since he would have nothing but his bond to the letter, she discomfits him by holding him to the letter of his bond. The tender woman's heart, that has up to a certain point had pity for the Jew, is from that moment sternly closed against him, and she becomes as grandly stern as the mouthpiece and organ of the court in declaring the law, as she had hitherto been beautiful and persuasive in her appeals to the better feelings for which she had given Shylock credit. Her arguments are no "pretty sophisms," as an admiring critic of Miss Terry's Portia in one of the leading journals called them. She has law and reason on her side. The Jew is self-convicted of compassing the death of a Venetian citizen; and it is by no legal quibble, but by the laws of Venice—"thyself shall see the act," she tells the Jew—that she defeats his purpose.*

If we are right in this conception of Portia, then Miss Terry's impersonation fails in its most essential point. Even those who have racked the language of panegyric in its praise have shrunk from claiming unqualified admiration for her in the trial scene. They might well do so, for at no one point in it does she indicate that she appreci-

* We observe that Miss Terry, following the reading for the first time given upon the stage by Miss Helen Faucit, turns to the volume of the Venetian statutes, and reads from it the passage, beginning "It is enacted in the laws of Venice," &c. But this was only one of many touches of genius by which this great actress used to make the whole of the scene a living reality.

ates the situation, or how it should be treated. The words are spoken, but so spoken that one marvels why they should issue from the lips of one who looks so little in earnest, who takes so little note of Shylock, or Antonio, of the Doge, and of the court, every one of whom it is her business to impress by the manner in which she discharges the function of determining the matter at issue, which has been delegated to her by the Duke.

We have spoken first of this scene because it is the touchstone of the actress's powers, and because our love of Shakespeare forbids us to be blinded by the attractions of either actor or actress to any failure in a due conception of the characters he has drawn for us with so firm a hand. But the shortcomings of Miss Terry, in our apprehension, begin at an earlier stage. She turns the character "to favour and to prettiness;" but she does not even aim at the distinction and the dignity which essentially belong to it. She is not the great lady of Belmont, the self-possessed queenly creature, whose very presence turns men of ordinary mould into poets, and attracts, even while she holds them at bay in admiring reverence. She fails especially to suggest the Portia that, as Shakespeare most carefully makes us aware, would have sacrificed even her love for Bassanio, deep as we see it is, had he failed to win her by the process appointed by her father.

How little this feature of the character is felt by the actress is made apparent in her treatment of the passage where she urges Bassanio to tarry, "to pause a day or two," before he tries his fortune with the caskets. Throughout all this fine speech she holds him caressingly by the hand, nay, almost in an embrace, with all the unrestrained fondness which is conceivable only after he had actually won her. This, too, when all eyes are fixed upon her, and when her demeanour would have made her secret known to all the world in the last way a lady would court under any circumstances, but especially when, had her lover chosen wrong, she must have been parted from him at once and for ever.* There is altogether a great deal too much of what Rosalind calls "a coming-on disposition" in Miss Terry's bearing towards her lover. It is a general fault with her, but in Portia it is painfully out of place.

A similar forgetfulness of what truth to the character and the situation demands, while the Prince of Morocco is making choice among the caskets, is visible in the far too marked demonstrativeness with which Miss Terry follows his movement from casket to casket. The room is full of people, servants, and others, any one of whom could tell in a second from Miss Terry's looks and movements when, in the words of the old game, he was hot, and when he was cold, and could

* If we are right in blaming the Portia, Mr Barnes, the Bassanio of the Lyceum, must share in the blame; for a just conception of Portia, and of his position towards her, would hold him aloof from any such display of caressing physical fondness. There is something singularly incongruous in the contrast between all this "fingering of palms," and laying of hands on arms, before he wins her, with the exceedingly reverential manner in which Bassanio, after he has the right to "claim her with a loving kiss," obeys this suggestion by bending courteously over Portia's hand and kissing it. The Bassanio of the Lyceum has to contend against disadvantages of person, and a bluntness of manner, little in harmony with the characteristics of the poet's Bassanio; but he plays with so much earnestness, and speaks with such an appreciation of the significance of what he has to say, that one is well content to "piece out his imperfections with our thoughts," and to be content.

have sold the information to the next wooer that arrived. It requires subtler touches than this lady seems to have at command, to indicate, without exaggerating, the emotion proper to a nature disciplined like Portia's to self-command.

There is, notwithstanding what we have said, much that is agreeable and attractive in Miss Terry's Portia, and no one will be surprised that uncritical people, who have not made their own separate study of the play, should be delighted with it. What we do wonder at, however, and most deeply regret, is the unmeasured terms of praise with which the critics of nearly all the journals have received it. Our wonder would be greater, if most of their criticisms did not at the same time show how little pains the writers had taken to make themselves masters of Shakespeare's text and of the intentions it reveals. One can only hope that Miss Terry's good sense will protect her from accepting too greedily the eulogies of indiscriminating admirers. They are certainly doing their best to spoil her.

To the same insidious influence Mr Irving is exposed, to a degree that, for his sake, would make us welcome the appearance of some other actor who should carry off a little of the extravagant enthusiasm of which he has at present the monopoly. But Mr Irving has the undoubted merit of not having been misled by it into dealing carelessly with his art. His Shylock is a decided advance, and perhaps, as a whole, his best Shakespearian performance. It is based upon a broad clear conception, and carried out in all its details with great finish and great picturesqueness. Mr Irving makes no attempt to create special sympathy for Shylock, but shows him—as Shakes-

peare, we fancy, meant him to be shown—as a man in whom the persecution of his race, and the indignities inflicted on himself by those with whom he had to cope upon the mart, had begot a settled abhorrence of all Christian men, intensified and concentrated into “a lodged hate” of Antonio. Antonio has treated him with contumely, has thwarted him in trade, has “hindered him of half a million,” has denounced his usuries, and, finally, baffled his revenge by “delivering from his forfeitures many that have at times made moan to” the Christian merchant. “Cursed be my tribe if I forgive him,” are among Shylock's first words; and he means to the letter what he says when he vows, if once “he catches him upon the hip, he will feed fat the ancient grudge he bears him.” Of course Shylock has affections of some kind. What man has not! But Shakespeare has been at no pains to call attention to this side of his character. His servant and his daughter have little to say in his praise, and it will never do to lay great stress on his tenderness over his turquoise ring, which he had “of Leah when he was a bachelor.” Pity for him Shakespeare certainly did not set himself to excite, beyond that pity which one feels for any human creature hardened by cruel usage, by the persecution of his religion, by sordid avarice, and finally, maddened, by the elopement of his daughter with a Christian, into the cunning, stony-hearted, merciless wretch, whose own calculated device in “the merry bond” is fitly turned against him to his ruin.

This is the man Mr Irving sets before us. If he had a voice that did not break into painful dissonances in transports of passion, and greater robustness of *physique* to give emphasis to his rage, there would be

little left to desire. No man, be his conception ever so fine, can go farther than his physical resources will carry him; and it is ungracious to point to failures in particular passages, when, merely from a defect of this kind, the actor cannot make out thoroughly all he would. Notably this is obvious in the famous scene with Tubal, where the wild transitions of rage and disappointment and vindictive menace are better suggested than expressed. The fine scene just before with Salanio and Salarino fails somewhat of effect from the same cause. But one forgets the cracked and screaming tones, and the occasional want of articulateness, in the powerful action, the visible intensity of the feeling, the thoroughness with which the ruling idea is worked out.

In his first interview with Antonio, however, Mr Irving commits what seems to us a grievous mistake. When Shylock changes from reproach to fawning in the speech beginning, "Why, look now, how you storm!" he comes close up to Antonio, and touches him on the breast with an air of familiar entreaty. Antonio recoils from him with contemptuous scorn, and Shylock bows low, while he winces at the rebuke. This has been praised as a fine stroke of truth. But is it so? Antonio has just told Shylock that he is "as like to spit on him again, to spurn him too." Would Shylock with these words fresh in his ears, forget himself so far as to lay a finger on the haughty merchant, never haughtier than at that moment, when asking a loan from a man he despised? Again, is such an action conceivable in one who feels the pride of race so strongly as Shylock? For one of "the sacred nation" like himself to touch the Christian merchant would in his mind be viewed as nothing less than contamination and defile-

ment. The momentary stage effect, which Mr Irving gains by the introduction of this novelty, is surely dearly purchased at the sacrifice of all probability.

Mr Irving's treatment of the trial scene is excellent. He never forgets, as most Shylocks have done, that he is in the great court of Venice, and he bears himself with a restrained intensity suitable to the situation. He lays no stress upon the incident of whetting the knife, but deals with it as merely something by the way. It is in the calm, immovable rigidity of aspect, in the concentrated force which he throws into his words, that he leaves, and rightly leaves, the audience to read the triumphant inflexibility of his purpose. This contrasts finely with the momentary flashing out of a passionate delight, where Portia's words to Antonio, "You must prepare your bosom for his knife," seem to put within his grasp the object of his hate. It contrasts still more finely with the total collapse of mind and body, when at a glance the full significance of the words—"This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood," bursts upon his keen intellect. In these words, and what follows, he seems to receive his death-blow. It matters little whether they strip him of his fortune, or tell him, as the condition of saving his life, that he shall presently become a Christian. His doom is written. His pulse will soon cease to beat. We feel the prop is in effect gone "that doth sustain his life." But he keeps a firm front to the last, and has a fine curl of withering scorn upon his lip for Gratiano, as he walks away to die in silence and alone. As he leaves the scene, we feel that we care not to know how this or that great actor of other days has treated it. This treatment is good, and it

is a fitting climax to the Shylock of the previous acts.

O, si sic omnia! Oh that the same care had been bestowed upon the study of all the other characters that has been bestowed upon this—the same pains taken to make them as true to Shakespeare and to human nature! It would be idle to expect that the general run of actors and actresses should do this for themselves. This is the office of the head of a great theatre—call him manager, stage-director, or what you will. His should be the mind to preside over the production of every play of this kind—to observe where characters are taken up wrongly, where action is introduced discordant with the characters, or untrue to the feeling of the scene—to see that the meaning of what is spoken shall be brought clearly out—and generally to make every one engaged do his best to complete the impression which the author had in view. If such a mind had been at work at the Lyceum, the graver faults to which we have called attention could not have arisen. A few vivid suggestions, firmly enforced, would probably have set all to rights, at least with the minor performers; for they all show sufficient ability and familiarity with

the stage to make it clear that they could profit by them. It would only be returning to the practice of the great patent theatres to have a director of this kind. And until the necessity be recognised for the presence at rehearsals of a predominating mind capable of fulfilling these functions, no theatre will ever satisfy an intelligent audience, or even do justice to the abilities of its performers.

One word in conclusion. Would it not be well for Mr Irving to set the example of trying to put a stop to the vulgar and distressing practice of recalling actors at the end of acts, or even scenes? It has long ceased to be a compliment to them, while it is simply an offence to all who deprecate so incongruous a disturbance of the illusion of the scene. We once saw Juliet in a London theatre—happily she was a foreigner, Mdlla. Stella Colas—rise from her bed in the great potion-drinking scene to curtsy to a clamorous knot of admirers. But we doubt if even this was worse than the spectacle of Shylock leading in Portia in her doctor's dress, for the same purpose, at the end of the trial scene, which may nightly be seen at the Lyceum.

REATA; OR, WHAT'S IN A NAME.—PART IX.

CHAPTER XXXI.—THE SHADOW OF THE CLOISTER.

"But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her."

—1 Corinthians xi. 15.

THERE were many preparations and signs of Otto's approaching wedding. The engagement was not yet four weeks old, but the marriage was to be soon: the day was not quite settled yet; however, it was to be some time in May, not more than another four weeks off. There was that pleasant unfurried flutter and quiet exhilaration in the Bodenbach family, such as always precedes a family event considered peculiarly satisfactory to all parties. There had been letters backwards and forwards between the two families, and all manner of politenesses interchanged, good wishes pouring in on all sides. There had been photographs exchanged likewise, two large ones in cabinet size of Otto and his bride being a special source of excitement and pleasure at Steinbühl. Never had there been such a thoroughly satisfactory match in every way. Count Przeszechowski had behaved most liberally with regard to settlements. Otto was to be considered a very lucky man. The old Baron grew daily more eloquent on the theme of Otto's luck, his own perfect satisfaction, and general thankfulness at seeing his younger son safely piloted into the harbour of a suitable marriage. There never passed a day now without Reata being stung by having to hear the endless repetition of these sentiments.

There had been at first a talk of the family going to Poland for the wedding, but this had only been in the first flush of excitement. They soon came to see that Gabrielle would never stand the journey and

fatigue; but of course Arnold would go and be present at his brother's wedding. The warm spring weather had not revived Gabrielle as other springs had done. She was less restless, perhaps, now that she always had Reata beside her, but she was not growing stronger for that. Her cough increased; she never cared to take a walk now, even on the brightest spring days. She had not been down to the village since that day of posting letters, and she said she would never care to go again. The old country doctor came more frequently to see her: he was bent upon taking a cheerful view of the matter, though he could not deny that she was weak, and seemed to be growing weaker. "All comes from growing," he would say pleasantly, as he clapped his snuff-box shut. "Baronesse Gabrielle was to take iron and not to get fatigued, and she would be all right in a few months." And so Gabrielle resigned herself to passive existence for the present, and found it easier to bear from having constant companionship. Always ready to attach herself to her surroundings, she had taken a passionate fondness for Reata; she looked up to her, she clung to her, she worshipped her almost. Everything that Reata said or did was right, everything about her was perfection; she obeyed nobody as implicitly as Reata—nobody could quiet her so well when she was fretful. There was something strange and new about Reata's talk and ways of thinking that pleased the sick girl's

fancy, even though she often did not understand her. There was a fascination about her voice, about her beauty and her motions, which made Gabrielle like to lie and listen to her as she talked, or to watch her as she moved about, or sat working or unoccupied; and Reata soon got accustomed to being gazed at in this undisguised manner.

Music also had a soothing influence on Gabrielle. Reata was no particular *pianiste*: she had never learnt the scales, nor could she read off music at sight, or compose; but she had a whole lot of her national airs floating about in her head, which came to the surface like melancholy refrains when she was more than usually sad or dreamy. At those times she would sometimes find the power of expressing them by words and music, singing in thrilling tones that rose and fell softly like the song of some sweet wild forest bird, accompanying herself by a few simple chords on the old feeble piano; and at other times she could not play at all, and Gabrielle would ask for music in vain.

The affection and admiration of a creature so much weaker than herself awoke a response on Reata's side: at first she took a melancholy pleasure in being kind to Otto's sister, and thus returning good for evil, she told herself; and then she grew to like the girl for her own sake. She almost wondered at herself for still having the power of caring so much for any creature; she had fancied that her affections had been exhausted by that bitter disappointment. It might be the foreshadowing of the convent quiet and calmness of soul stealing over her, which made her so much more charitably disposed to everybody. Of Gabrielle she was growing daily fonder; she felt no *rancune* towards the old Baron for being Otto's

father, and none towards Arnold for being Otto's brother. She had scarcely ever quarrelled with Arnold lately, and yet she had met him often in her solitary rambles about the place—oftener than before.

Among the visitors who had come to Steinbühl to offer their congratulations upon the auspicious family event which was approaching, the Schwerendorfs were not; of course they would have been the first to come, but they had been away for the last month on a visit to some relations, and had only just now returned, and had written to say that they were coming next day.

"I hope they will come in time for dinner," Gabrielle was saying to Reata on the evening before; "and I hope the father won't come too."

They were in the sitting-room—it was beginning to grow dusk; through the open door of the balcony the green shoots of the creepers were seen hanging from the wooden trellis-work; they did not look green, but grey, in the dusk. Presently the wooden steps outside creaked, and Arnold came in by the balcony.

"Oh, Arnold, is that you?" said Gabrielle, as she saw his dark figure in the door against the grey light behind. "I have just been wishing for you. I want you to give me those photographs that came yesterday—the photographs of Otto and Halka, you know."

"Oh, nonsense! I have got no time just now; you have looked at them quite enough."

"But I want to show them to Reata. She has not seen them yet, and I have been telling her about them."

Arnold looked at Reata. She was sitting, leaning back in a sloping arm-chair, doing nothing—nothing could be done in this light till the lamp came; he could see

the graceful outline of her figure, but he could not see her face. "I do not think that the photographs can possibly interest Fräulein Reata." (Reata had some days since requested him not to call her Fräulein Lackenegg, but Fräulein Reata, she being more accustomed to the latter, she said.)

"Oh, but yes, Arnold, I want to show them. Halka's photograph is so pretty, and I have hardly seen it at all; and you want to see it, Reata, don't you?"

"It is much too dark to look at anything——" Arnold was beginning, but Reata interrupted him. "I should like to see the photograph very much, and it is not too dark for me to see it; my eyesight is excellent." Her tone was very calm, but a little defiant. Lately she had thought to learn by various signs that Arnold guessed at her secret, and now and then she fancied that he was trying to spare her any unnecessary pain, and she could not stand being pitied: whatever her troubles were, she was quite able to bear them alone. Arnold looked at her again, but it was no good looking at her, because her face was in the shadow; and then he went and unlocked a little drawer, and took out a large photograph. He glanced at it and laid it back again, taking out another.

"Why are you putting that back?" asked Reata, as she followed his movements.

"It is not the one of Comtesse Halka," he replied, closing the drawer; "it was only my brother's."

"But why don't you show Otto's also?" said Gabrielle.

"Yes, I want to see it too," said Reata, looking at him steadily, and speaking steadily; and then he brought them both and put them into her hand. She was sitting up on her chair, and put out her hand

for them. It was too dusk to see anything here, so she rose and went to the open balcony door. There was not quite light enough either here, it seemed, for now she stepped out and leant over the wooden balustrade. Of course she looked at Comtesse Halka's photograph first: her eyes eagerly sought the portrait of that face of which her fancy had drawn so many pictures, and upon which she had speculated till she was tired of speculating. She held it now in her hand, and she gazed on it with a critical, searching gaze. Her first impression was, "How pretty!" her second — "Not so pretty after all, if one takes her to pieces." And Reata did take her to pieces most thoroughly: what severer judge can a woman have than her supplanted rival? A perfect photograph in its way, perfect in the distribution of lights and shadows, in the grouping, and in all the minor details of surroundings. Comtesse Halka knew better than to have her face alone photographed. It was not upon her face alone that she counted, it was upon her appearance as a graceful whole — upon her pose, upon her background and foreground — that she built her hopes of producing a general impression of prettiness and refinement. Here she was half leaning over a balustrade, the folds of her light dress showing between the columns of dark wood or stone, or more likely pasteboard, like most photographers' railings; a striped oriental *bourous* draped about her arms and shoulders, and partly over her head, setting off the lightness of the dress and of her hair, and spreading a becoming softness over the outlines of her figure. The hair arranged with careful carelessness; her head half turned, held at precisely the angle most favourable for displaying certain advantages of feature, and best

calculated to nullify certain other disadvantages.

Each line of this *Reata* scanned, and then repeated her opinion that it was not so pretty as at first sight appeared, and a thrill of secret satisfaction came to her at the thought. The other photograph was Otto's, of course. Comtesse Halka had refrained from indulging in the vulgar satisfaction of seeing herself and showing herself to her friends on the same picture with the man for whom she had angled so successfully. It has always seemed to me that this mania of engaged and newly married couples for instantly rushing to the photographers, and immortalising themselves side by side, is peculiarly pointless, verging on the childish. It is a wonder that the men paraded as victims in this manner (for it is to be supposed that the fair sex is the moving power in these cases) do not oftener rebel, and break the fetters which are thus vulgarly displayed. Of course, I only mean the engaged men, not the married ones, who presumably are more hardened to the bearing of their chains. And even supposing that both parties are equally anxious to present themselves to the world as a happy couple, the trial is always a severe one. If it is difficult to look at your ease, and natural, in a common photograph (and who has not felt this?), it must be wellnigh impossible, when standing self-consciously before your still more self-conscious bride. If you look affectionate, you look like a fool; if you look thoroughly indifferent (as, to do them justice, most men do), you look as if you had quarrelled, or had been bullied into the match. It is considered barbarous to couple betrothed people's names together, printed on pieces of cardboard, as is still the custom in some remote circles of German middle-class

society; but if this is justly condemned as objectionable and vulgar, surely it is more objectionable and more vulgar to couple faces and forms together. And when, as often happens, the two faces and forms change their minds, and decide that, after all, they will prefer to go through life separate, what a pleasant sensation it must be for either party to think that perhaps dozens of these little pictures are afloat in the world, demonstrating clearly, black upon white, what might have been!

No; Comtesse Halka was far too wise to fall into this mistake. Otto had been skilfully angled for, and safely hooked; but fish sometimes take fright at the last moment, and, with a desperate effort, tear themselves loose.

Reata took full five minutes to gaze at Halka's photograph, and then with a slight tremor she bent over the other—over Otto's. No need for speculation here—she knew each one of his features, every look, every expression. Here no balustrade, no graceful attitude,—for Otto is not a woman that he should set himself off with tricks of dress and surroundings, and he does not need any such setting off. Merely his head and shoulders, with a dark shadow behind; a handsome head—the very type of manly grace. As *Reata* bent over the picture, she was conscious of examining the likeness for the first time with a critical eye; but there was no fault to be found there, though she scrutinised it severely. As long as he had been her own special property, she would not have cared to look for a flaw; now that he was another's, she would not have minded finding one. The face, as she now saw it, seemed to her older and graver, but that was all.

"*Reata!*" called out Gabriel from the room within, "aren't you

coming in? It is getting so cold, and I am all alone."

"Yes," she called back, "I am coming—and then she saw that a heavy drop had fallen on the paper and blistered it. "Can I have been so foolish as to cry?" thought Reata, as she wiped it away carefully with her handkerchief. "I suppose my eyes have got so accustomed to tears that I cry without noticing it." But she was quite mistaken; her eyes were dry: it was only a large dew-drop which had rolled off one of the creeper-leaves. Her Mexican blood and pride would not allow her to cry over Comtesse Halka's bridegroom. And yet Reata went back into the room more than half under the impression that she had been shedding tears, and therefore was glad that the lights had not come yet. These little illusions are very harmless and very soothing sometimes.

Arnold was no longer in the room,—only Gabrielle lying on her sofa. Reata shut the balcony door,—it was beginning to get chilly.

"Well, how do you like the photographs? Isn't Halka pretty? and how becomingly her hair is done! I wonder how it is arranged! I am going to try to do mine to-morrow like that."

Reata had sat down on the foot of Gabrielle's sofa.

"May I try it on your hair?" and she began pulling down one of Reata's heavy plaits. "There, do sit on the footstool; I can reach it better."

"I don't think you will get my hair to sit like Comtesse Halka Przeszechowska's,—hers is all frizzled and fuzzed out, and looks like wool or tow, or chopped straw, or something of that sort."

"And yours is just like black floss silk," said Gabrielle, passing her fingers down it as she spoke.

"What a time it takes to undo

this plait, and how long it is, trailing on the floor as you sit! It is as long as Hermine's, and twice as thick."

"Why did your brother go away?" asked Reata. "I ought to give him back the photographs."

"Oh, I don't know; he went away immediately after he had given them to you. Ah, here are the lights at last! now I shall be able to see you better." And as the lamp was placed on the table, it threw a flood of light downwards right upon Reata, as she sat on her footstool. Oh, how beautiful! exclaimed Gabrielle, as she finished opening the plait, and held up the hair in her hand, to let it fall down in a heavy shower about Reata's shoulders.

"I am afraid I can't arrange your hair like Halka's," went on Gabrielle, as, with her little white childish fingers, she began lifting up the heavy tresses. "What good taste she must have! do you not like the way her dress is made?"

"I never looked at her dress at all," Reata answered, shortly; "I only looked at her face."

"I am so curious to see her; it is such a pity I can't go to the wedding, it would have been such fun—wouldn't it?"

"I have never seen a wedding, and I hope I never shall see one," said Reata, fervently.

"Not like to see a wedding! how funny you are! you say such odd things. O Arnold, what a fright you gave me! I never heard you come in."

Reata looked up, also slightly startled at being discovered in this undignified posture. Arnold was standing beside the table with the two photographs in his hand, but he was not looking at them—he was looking straight across the table at Reata. She met his look, and wondered for a moment, and then

she remembered that she was sitting there with all her hair hanging down over her shoulders and arms, and trailing on the ground, and she jumped up hastily. No wonder that he looked at her in surprise. As she stood there for a second to shake back the flowing masses, they fell all round her, a great soft black cloud, down to her knees, covering her shoulders like a mantle, and shining here and there in the light of the lamp with a silky gloss.

"I must go and put up my hair for tea," she said, almost impatiently, to Gabrielle; and she went out hastily, not looking again at Arnold, but feeling that his eyes still followed her to the door. When she had reached the top of the staircase she said to herself aloud, "He is not nearly as handsome as his brother—no, no, not nearly." And then when she was in her room she put two candles beside the glass and looked at herself scrutinisingly—almost as scrutinisingly as she had looked at Comtesse Halka's photograph. "No wonder he stared

at me like that," she reflected; "I do look rather like an untamed savage. I suppose he thought it wasn't proper. I wonder," she added, a minute later, "whether he really did think it improper!"

She sat down and began plaiting up her hair loosely, still looking at her own reflection in the glass. "I wonder that there are no grey hairs to be seen yet! Some people turn white in a night, after a grief like mine, and with others I have heard it comes more slowly. I suppose it is my Mexican pride that has kept it from changing yet."

"Gabrielle says it is as long as Hermine's," she continued, dreamily, beginning the second plait. "So she has got long yellow hair; just the sort of woman to suit him, Otto said, and just the reverse of me. To-morrow I shall see her."

Then as she wound the plaits round her head again, and threw a last glance in the glass, she concluded, "I wonder whether there is any order of nuns where they do not cut off their hair!"

CHAPTER XXXII.—REMINISCENCES.

"Hast du, hast du vergessen
Die alte selige Zeit,
Wo wir so stille gesessen
In süßser Traulichkeit
Wir saßen im kühlen Schatten
Und guckten uns traulich an.
Wir theilten was wir hatten—
Wir spielten Frau und Mann."

—ADOLF SCHULTZ.

Next day Hermine came: Gabrielle's wish that the Schwerendorfs should come in time for dinner was fulfilled, for they came half an hour before the dinner-hour; and her second wish that Hermine's father should not accompany them was also fulfilled, for Monsieur Schwerendorf was detained by business, and sent his excuses and congratulations through his wife and daughter.

"Oh, I am so glad!" said Gabrielle

to Reata, as they stood on the balcony while the visitors got out of the carriage; "there is only Hermine and her mother." And Reata looked, and she saw first a stout old lady with a great many curls about her face step down; and then a tall young lady, very tall and very stately, with yellow hair, step out after her; and looking narrowly, she saw Arnold kiss the old lady's hand, and then take the young lady's hand

and press it very cordially, bending down a little, and saying something that looked from the balcony like an affectionate welcome, and no doubt was so in reality. "This was all perfectly in place," thought Reata; of course he does not kiss her, because they are not alone."

It was certainly not from her mother that Hermine had inherited her good looks. Madame de Schwerendorf was less tall than her daughter, and much less stately; her hair was three quarters grey and one quarter yellow; there was very little of it, whether yellow or grey, and it was all pushed forward towards the front, to make the most of it, on the principle of concentration, and arranged on either side of her face in a bunch of curls, the vacuum at the back being filled up by a sort of nest of lace and ribbons under the bonnet. She was sweet-tempered, too, like her daughter, but, unlike her, more lively, and she had one or two little tricks of manner and speech of which Hermine was quite innocent. When she wanted to be particularly affectionate or impressive, she had a way of nodding her chin and shaking her curls into people's faces; and she had two pet exclamations which she applied indiscriminately to whatever might be going on, "*Pour l'amour de Dieu!*" and "*Quelle idée!*"

"There, my dear," she exclaimed, catching sight of Gabrielle on the balcony; "I see you, but don't come down here, *pour l'amour de Dieu!* I shall get up those steps, although I always said they were a mistake—just the thing to tempt young people to be running down at all hours and catching colds." And the old lady mounted the steps a little breathlessly, and seizing Gabrielle's two hands, kissed her with effusion, shaking her curls forward. "Your father says you have been ill," she exclaimed, peering into the

girl's face with her ugly little green eyes, which shone with thorough good-nature. "*Quelle idée,* my dear! you will soon be all right again. So this is your new friend," as she turned to Reata, who stood by, well amused in making her own observations. "And you have come all the way from Mexico alone, my dear,—*quelle idée!* I never should have believed it." Here Reata was put through the same ceremony of kissing, and got the full benefit of Madame de Schwerendorf's curls in her face (a mark of special good favour, if she had only known how to prize it), and then was benefited further by a very long and very approving stare from Madame de Schwerendorf's green eyes, under which lengthened scrutiny Reata half turned away, colouring with uneasiness. Meanwhile Arnold and Hermine had not got up the steps yet: they took a long time to get up a dozen steps, Reata thought, and she felt provoked at the delay, for she had only had a glance at Hermine, and now she wanted to see her near. Reata had seen so few people in her life, she had lived in such seclusion, that every new acquaintance was an event to her, and every new face something to study,—the more so when, as now, it was a girl of her own age.

Reata was to have plenty of leisure to study Hermine's face and appearance, for before dinner was over it had been arranged that she was to be left at Steinbühl for a day, her mother returning home alone that afternoon.

After dinner the company separated naturally into the old and the young section—the two old people remaining in, to have a little quiet conversation, and the four young ones strolling out into the garden. Reata had persuaded Gabrielle to join them, promising to walk with her as slowly as she liked: she did

not much relish the idea of turning the happy couple into an uncongenial trio.

"How little Gabrielle ate at dinner!" exclaimed Madame de Schwerendorf, when she was alone with the Baron. "My dear friend, you should feed her up, you should feed her up; she must be fed up, *pour l'amour de Dieu!*"

"What am I to do?" said the old Baron, helplessly. "She is so fanciful, you can never count upon her appetite. The doctor has ordered her iron; he says she is only growing."

"Growing! *quelle idée!* Iron! *quelle idée!* That is not what she wants. Give her cod-liver oil,—that is the only thing I believe in. Hermine has never been delicate, but I made her take it regularly as a child for fear she should become so, and you see how splendidly it has answered. Yes, fatten her up, *pour l'amour de Dieu!*"

The old Baron sighed again helplessly. Madame de Schwerendorf never could stand seeing any one distressed, so she changed the subject at once. "Yes, it is quite an age since I have seen any of you—over two months. I don't remember when I have been for two months together without seeing you."

"Ah, yes! these two months have brought us changes—very sad changes; my poor cousin Olivia, you know, whom I have lost."

"Yes, very sad," said Madame de Schwerendorf, shaking her curls. She was always favourably inclined towards anything in the way of romance, and had often thought it was a pity that Walther Bodenbach had not been allowed to marry his cousin; but, on the other hand, she had been a good friend of Baroness Bodenbach's, and she found it rather difficult to make out how far it was right of her to show interest in the revived dead love of her friend the

Baron. She was torn between these two points—the point of duty and the point of romance. On the whole, after taking a rapid review of the case in her mind, she was inclined to think that, both ladies being now dead, there could be no harm in giving a little encouragement to the romance; therefore she said, with another shake of her curls, "So sad that you had not seen her again after that long separation."

"And after all that passed between us," groaned the Baron. "You know what she was to me once: I have told you."

"Yes, you have told me, my dear friend, often," replied Madame de Schwerendorf, again vacillating between her hankering after romance and her desire to keep up her dead friend's memory. "Of course, of course, that was perfectly right, long before you knew your poor dear wife."

"I have never known a moment's peace or happiness since I parted from Olivia," said the Baron, drearily, as he finished off his cup of black coffee.

"Except, of course, during the years of your marriage with poor Sophie," corrected Madame de Schwerendorf, beginning to fear that the romantic side of the question was gaining a dangerous ascendancy. "Now, of course, that she is dead, you have a perfect right to be as unhappy as you like, and that must be a great comfort to you."

"Ah, but my heart always remained with——"

"Yes, yes," interrupted the old lady, fidgeting nervously with her curls; "of course she was your cousin, and you had a right to think of her—that does make a difference, to be sure." And then finding that the two interests were rather troublesome to balance with perfect nicety, she abandoned the subject quickly by making some inquiry about Reata.

"Oh, I do hope she will remain with us altogether," said the Baron, in reply; "Gabrielle has got so attached to her, and she manages everything so well. She does speak sometimes of returning to Mexico, but I hope we shall be able to persuade her to remain; and after all I owe to——"

"Go back to Mexico! *Quelle idée!* She must not be allowed. But I don't think you will be able to keep her for long; such a lovely face, she is sure to be married soon."

"I hope not; I don't know what Gabrielle would do: and she always plays draughts with me in the evenings."

"It is lucky that dear Otto is out of the way, so impressionable as he is. I almost wonder that he escaped falling in love with her in Mexico. Fancy how dreadful it would have been, *pour l'amour de Dieu!* losing all his fortune; for she is of no family, didn't you tell me?"

"No, no family at all: the name is Lackenegg, and nobody could guess it to look at her. You might think she belonged to the oldest family in Germany. Not Germany either, with those dark eyes,—her mother was a Mexican."

And then from this subject they go to talk of Otto's engagement, and all the delights and advantages it would bring with it. Then the Baron, to show interest in his turn, began asking after the way in which his friends had been spending their two months of absence. At this Madame de Schwerendorf put on a mysterious air, and, after a little mock fencing, let fall a dark hint to the effect that Hermine had been the object of serious attentions from a very desirable *parti*—the man in question being Count——, rich, of a suitable age—that is, not over forty—possessed of a very

handsome family estate in Bohemia; and it further turned out that this desirable man had given hints of his intention to pay a visit to Styria shortly.

"And how did dear Hermine receive his attentions?" inquired the Baron, rather anxiously.

"Well, rather coldly, to tell you the truth, and I would never dream of pressing her on the subject—*quelle idée!*—even though the match would be as desirable as any mother would wish for her daughter. She must choose whatever makes her happiest. After all, I begin to think sometimes that she likes old friends best."

"I hope so, I am sure; we could not afford to lose Hermine." And then the old Baron thought to himself, "If only that precious Bohemian Count doesn't pay his visit to Styria before June. It would be no use pressing Arnold to speak sooner,—might make him turn stiff."

And Madame de Schwerendorf looked at him with a little moisture in her green eyes, and said, "*Quelle idée!*" several times over.

They understood each other quite well, these two old people. The subject had often been hinted at between them in this way, but never more directly than to-day.

Meanwhile there were other conversations going on in the garden. Reata was sauntering slowly up and down the middle walk with Gabrielle. She had succeeded in surmounting the repugnance which had kept her away from those gravel-walks for so long. When the ice is once broken in a thing of that sort, the continuance follows naturally, merely as a matter of time. On the stone bench were sitting Arnold and Hermine. The two other girls, as they sauntered together up and down the walk, could hear their voices through the lilac-bushes; and now and then, at

a turn, they caught sight of them as they sat there in the shadow of the branches. "How foolish of them to sit on that cold stone bench there!" thought Reata, as she again caught sight of the two figures, and saw Hermine smiling at Arnold with her teeth flashing white. Reata forgot how she herself had sat there in much colder weather nearly a month ago.

The lilacs were out at last. They had been long in coming, but now that they were there, they hung fragrant and fresh from every branch. Large drooping sprays trailing down till their dewy flower-laden heads touched the earth. Whole masses of tall strong bushes standing close together, with their topmost branches dancing in the breeze, making quite a sea of pale lilac—none of those sickly Persian lilac or stunted *fantaisie* specimens; there is nothing here but the good old orthodox bush, with its large juicy flowers, all lilac, only here and there a bush with white blossoms, showing like dead white biscuit china among the rest. The whole garden was perfumed with the flowers, and melodious with the song of birds. This was always the best time of the year for the Steinbühl garden. It had not many ornamental flower-beds to depend on, and what roses it had were all planted along the southern wall, and not visible from the rest of the garden. It had no well-kept grass plots, or rustic baskets, or stone vases; it could only look to its lilac-bushes for a short period of glory; and when the lilacs were faded and over, as lilacs are always in such a hurry to be, it was wont to look sad and shabby. Even the birds seemed to find it so, for then they would no longer sing with such exuberant gladness as in those days when the lilacs, like their loves, had been in their first freshness.

"Let us go and sit in the summer-house," said Gabrielle; "I have not sat there for so long. Do you remember the day after you came, how we ran along the walk to it? I wonder if I could run like that now?"

"You must not try," said Reata; "but yes, let us go and sit in the summer-house—it is rather tiring to walk about."

And so they went up the steps, and from here they could see the stone bench where Arnold and Hermine were still foolishly sitting. Arnold was just breaking off a twig, the point of the big branch which hung over the bench, the very same sprig which Reata had, that morning four weeks ago, settled upon in her mind as the one which Otto was to give her, and she to keep to her dying day. What had become of all those hopes that were to have been fulfilled long before the lilacs were out? "I suppose he is going to give it to Hermine," thought Reata, as she saw Arnold bending a little nearer to her, "and of course she will keep it to her dying day;" but no, Arnold stuck the sprig into his own button-hole, and saying something to Hermine, they both rose and came towards the summer-house. "It shows his sense, not to go in for sentiment before people," thought Reata, approvingly; "and he is quite right not to want to sit longer on that cold bench."

"Well, what do you say to the changes here?" asked Arnold. "Are you not struck with the roof and the benches, Hermine? It was high time to renew them; don't you think so?"

"I liked the dear old benches so much," answered Hermine; "they reminded me so of old days. Don't you remember how happy we used to be here?"

"But why can't one be just as happy with new benches?" said

Arnold, prosaically. "They certainly are more comfortable to sit upon; there wasn't a plank remaining before that would bear my weight."

"Oh, but didn't they always remind you of our games, Arnold?" said Hermine, reproachfully. "Don't you remember the one that used always to be our throne as king and queen, and Otto used to be the ambassador from foreign courts?"

"What a stupid game!" thought Reata to herself; but aloud she said, "And what used Gabrielle to be?"

"Oh, I was sometimes the court fool, and sometimes the prime minister," said Gabrielle.

"And the dear old roof is gone too," continued Hermine, still sentimentally. "Our names were all cut in it. I remember so well the day I cut mine; it was on my tenth birthday."

"Oh yes; and Arnold held you up at the top of the ladder, for fear of your getting giddy," cried Gabrielle.

"How very silly to go up a ladder when you are afraid of getting giddy!" thought Reata.

"The roof had got so rotten with age and damp that it could not possibly have stood another winter," said Arnold, who seemed decidedly inclined to take the matter-of-fact view of the question; "and the rain came in in torrents latterly."

"I liked the dear old roof," sighed Hermine, in a somewhat monotonous strain.

"It is surely much better to have a dry roof over your head," remarked Reata; and Hermine acquiesced sweetly, but still declared that she liked the dear old roof best. Hermine had got into a train of reminiscences, and, as was often the case with her, she could not easily be brought away from them. As long as they remained in the

summer-house there was a continued series of "Do you remember this, Arnold?" "Or that day? don't you know the day that Gabrielle tumbled out of the window of the summer-house?" &c., &c.; and Reata sat and listened, having no part in the conversation, having no part in any of the recollections of their childhood; and as she sat by silent, a shade of loneliness crept over her. She had been accustomed to much solitude in her life; companionship had been a thing she had scarcely known, but she felt the want of it just now. It is a dull pastime to sit by silent, listening to the talk of others about things you know nothing of.

Presently they left the summer-house and walked again; and now their order was changed—Gabrielle walked on with Hermine, and Arnold a little behind with Reata. They had started all four together, but there had been some stopping and some pointing out of a hedge-sparrow's nest in a boxwood-bush; and Hermine had begun telling Reata that the nest had been there every year for the last ten years, and Reata had expressed some doubt as to its being the identical nest and the identical bird; and then Gabrielle had led off Hermine to show her some new nest in another bush, and thus it had come that Arnold and Reata had dropped behind.

"I hope he is not going to begin next telling me his reminiscences," thought Reata. "Why can't people talk of the present instead of the past? it is much more amusing."

But Arnold did not attempt any reminiscences, he did not speak at all for a minute, but walked in silence beside her; the sprig of lilac was still drooping from his button-hole. As she looked up once, Reata fancied she saw Arnold's eyes watching Hermine at

the further end of the garden. "If he is so anxious to join her again, why does he not walk quicker?" she thought, and she made a step aside off the walk and broke off a head of white lilac; but he did not walk on as she had intended him to do—he stopped and turned round, waiting till she had joined him again.

"You like the white lilacs best, do you?" he asked—"we have not got many of them here."

"No, I don't care for them; I hate all lilacs. I find all your European flowers hideous," and Reata threw the head of white lilac after a large bumble-bee that was buzzing past, knocking over the clumsy insect on to the ground at their feet. Her speech had been not only rude but untrue—glaringly so,—for she had often shown her liking for the flowers about Steinbühl. She felt a little ashamed of her words, and so stooped readily over the fallen bumble-bee and picked it up tenderly with her fingers.

"Won't the beast sting you?" said Arnold, who belonged to the order of men who think that women should never be allowed to touch any sort of insect or reptile. There was a recollection in his mind of a wasp that had once settled on Gabrielle's sleeve, and tears and hysterics had been the consequence.

"They never hurt you if you know how to hold them," said Reata, opening her fingers and letting the captive free. "It is entirely a matter of practice, and very easy to learn, I assure you. In Mexico, I used often to hold *tabanos** and *escorpions*† in my hand."

Unspeakable horror on Arnold's face, who evidently considered the

accomplishment a very undesirable one for a lady to acquire. This, however, only incited Reata to conjure up more horrible examples of things she had seen and done in Mexico; and only when she had come to the end of her list of exploits, they discovered that they were the only remaining occupants of the garden, and that the others had gone back to the house some time before.

It was quite an established thing now for Reata to play draughts with the old Baron every evening after tea. There was usually only one game played, but it always lasted a long time, for the Baron liked to reflect before his moves; and insisted on Reata taking time for reflection too. There were draughts played this evening as usual. Madame de Schwerendorf had returned home, leaving Hermine, as had been arranged, for a day longer. The Baron and Reata sat near the open balcony-door, the draught-board on the little table between them. Over there at the other side of the room Arnold and Hermine were sitting. Arnold had no newspaper to-night; he talked—they were both talking. Hermine, leaning back in her easy-chair, looked handsome and contented; she smiled often, and often looked up at Arnold. She was not flirting with him; she had not the knack of doing it, even had she wished. She never could flirt with anybody, least of all with Arnold. It was only that to talk to him and to hear him talk, or even to sit silent beside him, was happiness to her, and that her happiness shone out in her eyes and on her lips, a calm, unruffled contentment, which did not look much beyond the present moment, but which yet unwittingly confided in the future with a great confidence, the confidence of

* Hornets.

† Scorpions.

blindness and of love. The conversation over there was not loud, not very gay or lively, but it was pleasant; only now and then a word came distinctly to the ears of the two draught-players, and now and then Gabrielle put in her little remark.

The Baron was very attentive to his game to-night; he took even more time than usual to reflect before his moves, and insisted on the same attention and forethought on the side of his opponent. If ever Baron Bodenbach was a tyrant, it was during the half-hour that his game of draughts lasted.

"There now, my dear, you have done that too fast; you have not taken time to think," he exclaimed, after one of Reata's unconsidered moves. "You really must take that back and take your time about it; there is no hurry, you know."

And Reata took back her piece, and reflected before the next move; but she found it much more disturbing to play draughts with a pleasant conversation going on at the other end of the room like to-day, than when Gabrielle lay quietly on her sofa and Arnold sat reading his newspaper in his arm-chair. Then the last piece being swept off the board, and the Baron triumphant, as Reata allowed him to be about every second day, the candles were blown out, and the Baron, leaning back in his arm-chair, prepared to doze off comfortably. He held his paper in his hand, not trying to read it—for in the first place it was far too dark here, and in the second he was far too drowsy—but merely as a sort of visible and palpable ground for quietude, as a sort of passive protest against any imputation of somnolence. This was all exactly what happened every evening. Reata sat for a minute putting back the draughts into their box, and then

she got up quietly and went out through the open balcony-door. This was not what happened every evening, for usually she would go and sit near Gabrielle on the sofa, and they would talk together, or Reata would read aloud to her, and Arnold would put down his paper and join in the conversation or listen to the reading.

It was a very dark night, no moonlight, no starlight—a white misty wreath hanging over the marsh, seen dim and shadowy through the darkness around. But though it was dark, it was not chilly; the air was very mild and very still, not even the reeds were rustling on their stalks. Reata pushed aside some of the Canadian creeper and leant over the balustrade. She was not there long alone, for presently she heard Arnold and Hermine's voices approaching; they were coming out too to enjoy the still evening.

"We will go there to-morrow morning," Arnold was saying, as they stepped out; and Hermine answered in her calm sweet tones, "Yes, Arnold, I should like it very much."

This was only an arrangement to go and see the new horse to-morrow; but it sounded to Reata's ears like something more, especially as Hermine started slightly on hearing the creepers rustle, and seeing a figure leaning over the balustrade in the darkness.

"Oh, Fräulein Lackenegg, I did not know you were here; we did not see you going out."

Arnold also looked quickly round—he had not seen her go out either. "Unnaturally warm, the air to-night," he said.

"It is almost like an evening in Mexico," said Reata.

"But it is a pity there is no moonlight to-night," said Hermine.

"Ah! but I like it better with-

out moonlight; for if there was I would see the trees, and I should know that I was not in Mexico."

"But you know that you are not in Mexico at any rate," said Hermine, wonderingly.

"But there is nothing to prevent me fancying that I am, with this warm air, and the creeper-leaves near me, and nothing but darkness outside."

"Nothing to prevent you!" repeated Hermine, looking at Reata in the darkness, with an increase of wonder in her eyes and tone. How could anybody imagine themselves to be in a country thousands of miles off, even if it were ever so dark around!

"I suppose the horse-chestnuts have to do duty for palm-trees," said Arnold.

"But they are not nearly as tall as palm-trees, are they?" objected Hermine.

"Not quite, but they do well enough by this light."

"You have not cut down my favourite tree, I hope!" said Hermine, turning to Arnold; and it seemed to Reata that she dropped her voice a little, so she moved off a step, so as to leave any sentimental reminiscences which might be impending undisturbed. Arnold's answer was not given very loud either, and she did not hear it, but she fancied she heard something about never destroying such a relic.

Meanwhile Gabrielle did not much enjoy being left in the sole society of her slumbering parent, and so she came out in quest of the others.

"It is a great deal too cold for you, Gabrielle," said her brother, severely.

"But it is not cold at all," said Gabrielle, pouting. "It is as warm as in the room, and I don't want to be left all alone."

"Perhaps we had better all go in," suggested Hermine, sweetly.

"No, no; it is so nice out here, I want to stay: surely, Arnold, if I put on a shawl!"

"Well, if you put on a shawl," assented Arnold, grudgingly, "you can stay a little."

Gabrielle came out again with her shawl muffled round her, and leant over the balustrade near Reata. There never was long silence when Gabrielle was there.

"How could you say it was cold, Arnold? It is quite like summer. I wonder if the weather is as warm in Poland? Do you think it is?"

"I have got no means of ascertaining," replied Arnold.

"How cross you are!" complained Gabrielle, fretfully. She was much more easily fretted and put out now than she used to be. "I have been wondering," began Gabrielle again, presently, "what sort of a present Otto has given Halka. Wouldn't it be funny, Arnold, if he had also given her a watch, like papa?"

But Arnold was not listening, or did not want to listen. He was bending down to answer some remark of Hermine's. Reata, at Gabrielle's other side, a little apart from the three others, remained silent. She had been silent ever since Gabrielle began talking, and her head was a little turned away. Once, when Arnold was answering his sister with evident impatience, she had noticed him glancing towards her, and it made her angry to think that he was doing it out of pity to her.

"What do you think he has given her?" repeated Gabrielle, obstinately.

"I don't know," with growing impatience.

"But he must have given her something—don't you think so!"

Don't bridegrooms always give presents to their brides?"

"Nonsense!" said Arnold roughly, turning round hastily upon his sister. "Can't you hold your tongue, you little fool! I never saw anybody make themselves into such a nuisance as you with your badgering questions; enough to make a saint swear!" Arnold was talking loud and angrily. Hermine looked up, startled; she had often heard Arnold answer his sister crossly, but never like this. Gabrielle stared at her brother for a second in amazement, and then took the only course that was open to her at the moment—she burst into tears.

"Oh, Arnold, how dread—dread—fully unkind you are! how hor—hor—horrid of you!" she sobbed out, hysterically; and then, without looking at anybody, she rushed in through the open door, flying past the sleeping Baron, who opened his eyes for a second in fright, and then relapsed into blissful unconsciousness.

Reata had raised herself from her leaning posture, and made a step as if to follow, but at the door she stopped, and turning round again, she confronted Arnold angrily, defiantly, with heightened colour and flashing eyes.

"How dare you treat her in that manner, Baron Bodenbach? How dare you be so rough, so ungenerous, with a poor delicate girl like her?"

Reata stood just on the spot where the lamplight from within was streaming out, so Arnold could see her face distinctly, but she could not see his. He stood bolt-upright now; he was looking at her fixedly. Hermine was beside him; she had moved a step nearer him with an unconscious instinct at Reata's first words. Her first impression was, that Reata had gone mad; she had never yet seen anybody who dared

to attack or blame her hero. Whatever he did must be perfection, even if in appearance it was not so. Perhaps Arnold was as much startled as Hermine, for he did not speak, he made no attempt to reply.

"What harm can poor Gabrielle's questions do you?" went on Reata, talking high and impatiently. "She is hardly more than a child, and you, who are a great strong man, might well be able to keep your temper with her: ridiculous!" and she threw back her head scornfully. She was just in the humour to say hard things to Arnold, to everybody, she hardly knew why. She was really very indignant about his treatment of Gabrielle, and she never thought that it was anything but that indignation that was making her speak thus, making her voice quiver with tremulous anger.

A half-exclamation escaped Hermine. She had never yet heard Arnold called "a great strong man" before, and the shock was considerable; she said "Ah!" and opened her blue eyes to their fullest extent of amazement, but she did not yet find words to speak. Arnold still stood upright and silent, with his eyes on Reata's face. Was he angry? Was he penitent, or merely surprised? In the darkness it could not be seen.

"I thought it was every man's, every gentleman's, duty to be courteous to women. Do you know what harm you are doing to that poor child, with your rough words and your angry looks?"

"I am sure Arnold never meant to do any harm or to be unkind," said Hermine, finding the power of speech at last.

"That is what you think, of course," said Reata, not looking at Hermine, and putting out her hand impatiently, as if to ward off the interruption; she was speaking only

to Arnold, not to Hermine. "Gabrielle will be crying herself ill with fright and vexation; she will make herself weak and wretched. You know that as well as I, and she is weak enough already."

"Do you think so?" said Arnold, speaking at last, and making as he spoke a step forward, till he stood within the circle of lamplight. His tone was not angry, but it was grave and disturbed, and his eyes hung on Reata for an answer—"Is she really ill?"

"Can't you see that—that——" said Reata, still angrily, and then her voice shook, and she broke off suddenly.

"What?" said Arnold, not with any shade of impatience, but as if a fear had suddenly been born in him; and he looked for her answer in breathless suspense.

"Her mother died of consumption," said Reata, her own voice becoming low and moved, now no longer with anger, but with pain, and her eyes filled suddenly with tears.

Arnold looked at her, startled. She had turned away, almost sorry for what she had said, almost frightened at her own words; she had not meant to say them. She had hardly been aware of her thought; the fear which had hovered in her mind seemed real only now that she had spoken it; and she knew by the hot tears she felt standing in her eyes, how dearly she had got to love the weak foolish girl already.

"I hope you may be wrong," said Arnold, in a changed tone, and then he passed into the room and through it without another word.

The two girls were alone; Reata sorrowful, disturbed, now more angry with herself than with any one else—Hermine bewildered, shocked, and smarting under the hard words that had been said to Arnold. She

had hardly taken her eyes off Reata since the first words; she was looking at her still in deep reproach.

"What have you done?" she said; "you have made him unhappy."

Reata had almost forgotten Hermine's presence. She turned towards her now. "You love him very much?" she said, impulsively, reading the other's face with her searching eyes.

It was not a fair question—not a question which one woman should put to another lightly. Hermine had never been asked whether she loved Arnold, not even by her mother; she had scarcely asked herself—it had become so much a part of her very life, that the feeling was almost unconscious. She stood still, gazing at Reata, not with any resentment at the question, only with a sort of gentle wonder.

"Don't answer me—I should not have asked you," said Reata, hastily; but Hermine's eyes had answered her already, beaming with a soft bright lustre: those blue eyes, that were wont to be so monotonously sweet, seemed to grow deep and beautiful.

"Yes," she said, very low, half to herself, half to Reata. The question was strange and new to her, but not for a moment did she dream of saying anything but the truth, and then she moved away blushing, and leant dreamily over the balustrade; and from the sound of that one word, and the depth that had come into her eyes as she said it, Reata understood the keynote of the silent humble worship which made her hang on every word and look of Arnold's, that placid feeling of admiration and confidence which seems to be so far apart from passion, but which is as true as passion, sometimes

truer, and as strong, for it has grown up with the heart's own growth.

Reata looked at her as she leant there in the darkness, and then she

left the balcony noiselessly, as if not to disturb Hermine, and went up-stairs to look for Gabrielle and comfort her, as she lay sobbing on her bed.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—AN ARRIVAL.

Hermine remained at Steinbühl till next afternoon, but Arnold was not there; he had left home early, before anybody had seen or spoken to him, merely leaving a message which said that he would be back that afternoon—nothing about the business which took him away. The family were used to these sudden disappearances. Arnold often had to go off in this way to G—— without warning; and nobody thought anything of it this time, except, perhaps, Hermine, who gazed from the window wistfully, and wondered whether Arnold would be back before she went. But Arnold was not back when the Schwerendorf carriage came to fetch her.

"You must come back again soon," said Gabrielle, who all that day had lain on the sofa, exhausted by her hysterical fit of tears last night. "You must come back very soon and stay a long time—a week or ten days; this time I have not been able to enjoy your visit, and it is all Arnold's fault."

"Hush," said Hermine, as she stopped Gabrielle with a kiss.

After the Schwerendorf carriage had driven away, Reata sat in the sitting-room, writing. It was a letter begun some days before, for she was fond of writing in scraps, just as the fancy moved her, adding a phrase now and then. It was a long letter this one; she was just beginning the second sheet, having finished off the other with a graphic description of Madame de Schwerendorf, which I will not give, as

she has been so fully described already.

"The daughter is not at all like the mother," the second sheet began; "she has got yellow hair, and large blue eyes that look sleepy usually; but yesterday I saw them for a moment not looking sleepy, and they were lovely then—it was like looking down into a well of deep blue water; usually they look only like forget-me-nots. She is very handsome, but too large; she looks as if she had been made a size larger than life by mistake. I don't think she could lose her temper if she tried. I wonder if men always like women to be as sweet-tempered as that?—certainly Arnold Bodenbach does, for he is engaged to marry her. They do not talk about it much, and there seems to be no time fixed for the marriage yet; they want to wait a little, as they think her too young, I believe—just nineteen. Baron Arnold is not always particularly sweet-tempered himself, so perhaps it is by way of contrast that he likes her.

"I have not heard from you yet, and I am longing for a letter. Do write often, but don't scold me about anything, and *remember to go on addressing as I told you.* . . . I hope you will be able to come out this summer as you promised; perhaps you would also like to become a nun, and go into the same convent with me? Is not that a splendid idea? For of course I am going into a convent, as I told

you in last letter, as soon as the wedding is over and Gabrielle is better. I could not leave her just yet."

Having reached this point in her letter, Reata laid down her pen and reflected. "I wonder whether Gabrielle will be able to come and see me there? I suppose visitors are allowed. Otto and his wife shall never come; but perhaps the old Baron, and perhaps Arnold. I suppose when I am a nun I won't quarrel with him any more; and Hermine—— will Hermine come with him also, I wonder?" Reata frowned a little, and bit the top of her penholder. "I am not quite sure that I should care much for Hermine's visits—she is so wearisome."

The day was very warm, the first hot day that had come yet—there had been many bright sunny days before, but not a day which made one long for the coolness of deep shade; this was the first. All the windows of the sitting-room were open, and all the green shutters shut; the room was full of soft green light. Every vase in the room was stuck full with bunches of lilac; Reata had brought them in with her that morning, and the flowers were still glistening with dewy freshness untainted by the heat, breathing their scent through the room.

Reata had put on one of her cool white Mexican dresses for the first time that day; plain and untrimmed, very unlike the dresses which fashion prescribed, but the very simplicity of its lines setting off the beauty of her figure, darkening by contrast the shadows in her hair and in the depths of her eyes. She had also taken out one of her broad leaf-hats; it lay beside her on the table: she felt herself almost back in Mexico. On seeing her appear

thus attired, Gabrielle had burst into loud expressions of admiration. This, however, had been in the morning; now Gabrielle was upstairs in her room taking an afternoon sleep, as had of late become a daily habit.

Reata sat quite alone down here, for the Baron was in his writing-room, and Arnold had not returned: she took up her pen again and went on with her letter:—

"How I wish the marriage were over! There is only a fortnight more now. It is so lucky he is so far off, so that there is no danger of my seeing him again. By the time he comes I shall be safely buried in my cloister, and I shall have done with the world, and done with secrets for ever. They will hardly believe when they are told that——"

Here Reata paused suddenly, and lifted her head; it was a noise in the distance which had caught her ear, no more than the sound of wheels coming down the avenue. It must be Arnold returning. She rose and took her hat to go out and tell him to come in softly, as Gabrielle was asleep; she well knew that his rapid, resounding step was enough to awaken a sounder sleeper than Gabrielle. She had not spoken to Arnold since he had left the balcony last night, and she went out now to meet him with some curiosity as to his looks and words.

Arnold sprang from the dog-cart hastily, more hastily than usual; and then, to Reata's slight surprise, the vehicle, instead of going round to the stables, turned and drove again down the avenue. Seeing Reata on the balcony, he came up the wooden steps quickly towards her, two steps at a time, and he was near her in half a minute; but even as he was springing up,

Reata saw that there was some change in his face, some expression that looked like anxiety.

"Will you come in quietly, please, and not speak loud? Gabrielle is asleep up-stairs;" and she looked at him from under the shadow of her big hat which she had put on as she came out.

"She is not worse, is she?" he asked, gravely.

"No, no, just the same as usual; but she was very tired, and has gone to sleep."

Arnold looked relieved, but that anxious shade in his eyes had not gone yet. They had walked back into the room. "He does not ask whether Hermine has gone," she thought to herself.

"I have been to G—— to-day," he said, abruptly, "and I have seen Professor K—— about Gabrielle; he is coming out here to-morrow." Arnold paused; Reata looked at him surprised, almost touched. "After what you said last night, I thought it necessary to get some higher medical opinion about her."

Reata was a little ashamed of her outbreak yesterday. She had been ashamed of it before, and now the feeling deepened, but she could not say a word to show it; even had she wished, the words would not have come. She sat silent and a little embarrassed, wanting very much to make some remark about the doctor's visit, but not feeling quite sure of her own voice. Arnold did not wait for an answer, he had still something to say; he began walking up and down with his hands behind his back and his eyes on the ground, the surest sign of preoccupation with him. When he had made two turns he stopped before her, and without looking at her, said in a jerky, rather ungracious tone of voice, "I suppose I was rude last night to Gabrielle, and I didn't know she was ill. I

am sorry you should have such a bad opinion of me."

Reata, startled out of all her presence of mind by this unexpected speech, began stammering some incoherent reply. Arnold had turned, and was walking about again. "It was good of you to go for the doctor at once," she managed at last to say, tolerably composedly. "Is that why the dog-cart has gone back?"

This was also partly to satisfy her own private curiosity, which had been roused by the little incident she had witnessed.

"No, it is not that," he said, stopping before her again, and this time he looked at her strangely, with a look that might have been anger or reproach; his eyes were hard and searching. She got up from her seat, with an undefined feeling of uneasiness beginning to creep over her.

"Oh yes, you told me that the doctor was only coming to-morrow; I forgot," and she began pulling about some of the lilacs in the nearest vase.

"I came in here to tell you——" said Arnold, still looking at her, and then he hesitated. It was something so extraordinary for Arnold to hesitate in the middle of a phrase that Reata looked round at him in surprise.

"I think it right to tell you that my brother is coming; the dog-cart went back for him; he will be here directly."

"Directly!" repeated Reata, and there was a tone of bewilderment in her voice, and her hands dropped down. "He will be here directly!" Her face had grown white, she could feel the colour ebbing away from it, and then the next moment it flowed back again with double force. "Why did you not tell me before?"

"I did not know it myself; it

was only an hour ago on my way home that I got the telegram."

Wild ideas of flight and concealment came into her head, and for a moment she glanced round her helplessly, but in the next her presence of mind returned. It was a great surprise and a great shock, for she had hoped never to see him again; but her dignity must be kept up, must be thought of first. It would never do to give way to her fear in this way, especially before Arnold, with his supercilious looks. She turned her eyes upon him and looked at him quite steadily. He was not looking so very supercilious after all.

"I don't know why your brother's coming should affect me in the least," she said, haughtily; "and I don't see why you should announce it to me in this solemn fashion."

A minute ago she had complained of not having been told sooner, but that had been before she had recovered her presence of mind and her dignity, and she did not remember her words; neither did Arnold remind her of them, although he remembered.

"And what is the reason of this sudden arrival?"

"You know that Otto was in Vienna seeing about engaging a villa for the summer; he got done with his business sooner than he expected, I suppose, and so has made a run over just for one night. You know my father has not seen him since he was in Mexico. Of course he does not know of your being here."

"Of course not, how should he?" and Reata turned to the lilacs again. There was a minute's silence. "You had better tell him before he comes into the house. It will be a disagreeable surprise for him, and I would rather avoid any theatrical starts," and she moved her shoulders contemptuously.

"Very well," and Arnold turned to go, and went without looking at her again, slowly, thoughtfully, through the door and down the wooden steps.

It was very warm outside; the sun was lying hot upon the gravel, striking upon every pebble, and making it shine white; the grass blades on the lawn, now in their full prime of green luxuriance, had long shadows like dark threads coming from their roots, checkering and crossing and mixing with each other. The heat lay lightly as yet; it was not the sultry breath of summer, but a genial, well-meaning warmth, clear and bright—real May weather, of which one hears so much, but which so seldom comes true. All down the avenue, where Arnold was now pacing, the horse-chestnut flowers stood upon their branches, prim and waxen and delicate, with their little spots of crimson colour like a hectic flush on a creamy cheek; and if you looked at them from afar, you would fancy them a whole array of white candles perched on gigantic Christmas-trees.

There was a great noise going on all along the garden-wall—sparrows, a whole troop of sparrows, holding their evening revels; all chirping together in a chattering fashion, flapping their brown wings insanely, and cocking their heads in light-hearted impertinence; but "there is method in their madness"—they are going through movements quite as well regulated as most military manoeuvres, and quite as pretty a sight to look at. Now they all spread their wings and—whirr, they are all down from the wall in a compact brown cloud, and pecking at the insects on the gravel-walk below; then at some secret signal the cloud flies up, and the fluttering and chirping begin again.

It was three-quarters of an hour before the dog-cart came down the

avenue again, and during all this time the sparrows kept up their manœuvres, and Arnold walked up and down the avenue in wait for his brother, and within Reata passed the time in a fever of restless impatience. She dreaded the moment that was coming; she feared it, and yet she longed for it. She could have gone and hidden herself in the garden, or locked herself into her room up-stairs; but she would do nothing to postpone the meeting. Why should she fly from him? Let him speak to her if he wished, if he dared; it was not unlikely that his own courage would fail him, and he would shun her voluntarily, would avoid meeting her alone. She knew enough of him to be sure that his own inclination would urge him to turn aside from whatever threatened to bring him trouble.

Those three-quarters of an hour were the longest three-quarters of an hour which Reata had ever known; such long, weary, trailing minutes, following so slowly on one another,—and yet, when every now and then she looked at the clock on the writing-table, she was frightened to see how few still remained to count before the dog-cart would come. It was slow torture; she would much rather have been taken by surprise, she thought, than go through this preparation of trepidation and suspense—even a theatrical start would have been better. Why had she either not known of it at all, or known of it two or three weeks ago, when she would have had time to harden herself to meet him coldly, indifferently, as he should be met? Two or three weeks might have done that, but three-quarters of an hour could not, she thought—certainly they did not. Minute by minute she felt her calmness melting away; she had never felt like a coward

before, but she felt like one now. Absurd! She would not give way to this weakness; she sat down again to her letter, and wrote a few lines. No use! She raised her head after each word and listened, though there was no noise except the flutter and chirp of the sparrows on the garden-wall. Why, she could not even finish the phrase she had begun and been interrupted in! What was it all about? what was the use of finishing it? Was the dog-cart not coming nearer at this moment? Where would it be now? Coming along the high-road, round that corner with the hazel-nut-bushes, perhaps in sight of the house already! And he did not know she was there; if he thought of her at all, he would fancy her far away, over the seas, in another land. No, it was no use her writing, when her heart was beating so wildly and her pulses flying in this hot flutter. She pushed away her paper and got up impatiently; she went and plunged her hot face into the cool freshness of the lilacs. Her lips were dry and burning; she broke off a bunch and held it up to her cheeks, to her lips, for coolness. If only she could know for certain whether he would come in here at once! She went toward the balcony-door and saw only Arnold pacing about in the horse-chestnut avenue. She walked to the other window and looked out through the green bars of the shutter: still less to be seen here—nothing but the garden-wall, and the sparrows going on with their foolish antics.

“Ridiculous little things!” said Reata, when she had watched them for some minutes. “I wish they didn’t all look so cheerful, it does not agree with me just now. Ah! there they are going off—something has frightened them,” as the brown cloud rose suddenly into the air,

and dispersed on to the fruit-trees around. "Ah!" she said again, and turned from the window sharply. It was a sound outside, the sound which she had waited for so long, which had made her start—wheels grinding on the gravel. She was as scared as the sparrows, although, unlike them, she did not try to run away. And now came one—two moments of intense suspense: he was close to her now, no farther off than those steps; she could have seen him by only looking out of the window, but her courage failed her. A sensation came over her such as she had felt once before, one day far away on the Mexican plains: the heat in the room grew oppressive, the scent of the lilacs seemed to weigh on her senses and stifle her, and yet they were as fresh and as sweet as they had been half an hour ago; the change was not in them but in her. There were two voices—she could hear them distinctly as they talked outside—speaking low and hurriedly; his voice—yes, he was talking—and Arnold's low, deep tones answering him. Her mind flew back to the last time she had heard that other voice, to the day that they had

parted, to their last words; and now was it this way they were to meet again? Oh the difference there was between the dream and the reality! all those foolish fancies of gardens and flowers and singing-birds, amongst which they were to meet; and oh the great bitter difference between the trust and the love she had built upon, and the fickle affection which had withered away so fast!

There were the birds singing outside, and here were the lilacs, and the hero of the dream was close by, but the dream had not come true.

"Perhaps he will not come up," she whispered under her breath, as the voices outside grew still, and all was quiet for a moment; and she pressed her hands together till the flower she held was crushed, and stained her fingers purple—and the dead flower breathed a sweeter perfume than the living one. Then she heard a step, one man's step, coming up the creaking boards. She stood still, waiting, breathless, flushing from white to red, her eyes fixed, dark and strained, on the balcony-door; she listened—it was not Arnold's step—and she knew that Otto was coming.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—LOVED AND LOST.

"This hast thou lost!" He gazed and was undone."

—*ROCKES'S Italy.*

The soft green light that veiled the room in a half-transparent haze seemed for a moment like utter darkness, coming from the light outside, and Otto stopped within the doorway, shading his eyes with his hand, and staring into the gloom where that white figure was standing. He had come up the steps very hurriedly; his face was pale, and his eyes were wild and

startled. It was only a couple of minutes ago that he had learnt that she whom he had fancied to be at the other side of the world, whose face he had hoped never to see again, was here. They confronted each other for a moment, and she trembled and struggled with her fast-coming breath. Fícha came forward from the sunny spot she had been lying on, and sniffed cau-

tiously at the intruder, and then she sprang up at him, wagging her tail in joyful recognition of acquaintance, but Otto did not heed her. Then he dropped his hand, and Reata could see his face distinctly.

"Why have you come here?" he cried out, in a tone of anguish.

And all at once a great change came over her; all her agitation, all her tremor of a moment ago, vanished as if by magic. She was calm, cool, almost self-possessed; she did not tremble, she could look at him steadily. Was it a change, or only a revelation? Mists seemed to be rolling away in every direction; slowly, slowly, they seemed to fade, before she could see clearly, but it was really only the work of a second.

She knew that she did not love him, and she knew it as surely as if she had seen it written in the Book of Life.

It was not that he was less handsome than she remembered him, not that he had lost one whit of his manly grace and beauty. Since she had seen him last he had shaken off the last trace of boyhood, which had clung to him longer than to most men; he had entered into the first stage of perfect manhood. His features bear the stamp of it; his eyes have a graver light; he is handsomer than he was ten months ago. Even his uniform, the trying hussar uniform, which seems invented to bring out the defects of a man's build, served only to set him off to peculiar advantage, and Reata had never seen him in uniform before. She saw it all, she recognised it, she acknowledged his beauty, but only—she did not love him. The magic of his eyes, of his voice, was gone for her; she could look upon him calmly, and understand that for others the magic could still be, but for her it was not. She did

not hate him, her love had not turned to loathing; she would do for him what she would do for any other fellow-creature. If he were drowning, and could be saved by her, she would save him; if he wanted help, she would give it: but love him, as she once thought that she loved him, she did not. "Why was it? why was it?" she questioned herself wildly. "Was she not a woman to love, like other women, throughout life? Had she never loved him? Was it all confusion? Had she no heart? or was her heart dead?" The thoughts flew through her brain, but she could grasp at no conclusion, she could not stop to think now; one thing only she knew—she did not love him.

"Why have you come?" he cried out again, his voice ringing through the room with a tone of mortal pain, and he half stepped back, and leant his hand on the table for support. The lines of his face were working with the storm of an inward struggle. He stared at her, glared at her, with wide eyes, drinking and swallowing in every line of the figure before him with a greedy, thirsty look. To see her before him living and breathing was like the shock that had once come to him seeing her face in the sketch-book, only that the shock and the misery were tenfold now.

She did not make him any answer yet; she could only have spoken to wound him, and she was calm enough to feel pity.

"Reata, have you come here to drive me mad? Why are you here? Why do you stand so still?"

"You would not have had your family refuse me hospitality?" she said: "you know I have no other home to go to." She would not let him know the truth, that she had come only for his sake.

"Why was your coming kept secret from me? I should have

known of it. I have not been fairly dealt with; you should not have let me look on your face again; it will drive me mad!" he stared at her, and felt the enthrallment of her beauty enchaining him again. He had thought to strike out her image from his mind, and now he saw that he had been a fool to think so.

"You need never have seen me again if you had not come thus unannounced; it was to spare you that I asked them to keep my coming secret."

"Do they know?" he asked, in almost a frightened voice.

"Make your mind easy," and her lip curved scornfully; "they do not—at least, not your father. Your brother, I think, has guessed something."

"Make my mind easy!" he repeated, and he groaned aloud. "Don't talk of ease or of peace or happiness for me now. I thought I could live without you. I might have lived without you if I had not seen your face again. Is it to torture me that you look twenty thousand times more lovely than I remembered you, that you look at me that way with your eyes so great and so dark? Is it to drive me mad with recollections that you stand there in your white dress, looking as if you had never left Mexico? Have you done it all to drive me wild, to make me feel what I have lost? It was not to spare me, it was to torture me, that you kept yourself hid. You have deceived me, you are deceiving me. Oh, heartless! heartless!"

His voice was rising with his passion, higher and higher, more and more bitter. The pallid colour had left his face, and a dark flush spread across his forehead in an angry line.

"It was to spare you," she replied. "I have spared you more than you deserve. It is I who have

been unfairly dealt with. Why were you ashamed to proclaim our engagement? You had never even mentioned me to your family; they hardly knew of my existence. You had left them under the impression that I was an old woman of fifty or thereabouts. Do you think I do not know all that? You do not know what you are saying," and she moved a step back, further away from him. "And when you are calmer you will be ashamed of your words; you have no right to reproach me."

"Forgive me, Reata. No, I do not know what I am saying. I am mad——" he put up his hand to cover his face, for, in truth, he was ashamed of himself. "I have gone through enough to make any man lose his senses. Why was I obliged to choose between you and fortune?" "And why," it echoed in his mind, "did I satisfy my hatred at the expense of my love?" It was satisfied, but there was no contentment in the thought,—his hatred seemed just now cold by the side of his love.

"Ay, why, indeed!" she said, answering his words only, for his whole thought she could not guess. She had paled by a shade, and the darkness of her eyes grew darker yet. "You would have liked to hold us both, but you could not. You have made your choice, why should you complain?"

"My choice! Do you think my choice has made me happy? Everything before me is a blank, a dismal dreary blank, with nothing to lighten it."

"So you said in your letter"—her voice shook with scorn; "but you found consolation quickly."

"Do not mock me. I was not free—you know it. I had to sacrifice everything to the wishes of my family, to what I owed them."

"Don't tell me of that. Don't talk

to me of sacrifices; I know what they are worth. Does your family require of you to plight your troth to two women within six months?"

"I was not free," he muttered.

"You had a right to use your liberty as you chose," she said, haughtily. "I had given it you back. I have no want of faith to reproach you with,—you have not jilted me," and she laughed a bitter laugh; "only don't ask me to believe in the feelings you talked so much about. I was a child when I believed them, but I am a woman now, and I know their worth."

"You don't, you don't," he cried, and stepped forward. "You must believe me, you must listen to me, Reata; do not kill me with your coldness. I love you more than all the world—more than my life—more than I ever loved you before. I will get back my liberty at any price, and you must be mine again."

"Never!" she said, vehemently.

"Yes, you do love me still, although you look at me so coldly. You loved me, Reata, only a few short months ago—you must love me still!" He clasped his hands together and beseeched her with his eyes.

"No, I do not love you," she said, looking back at him straight; but then her head sank, and her lashes drooped. She did not love him, but she must not proclaim it so proudly. Was it not her shame, to have been so fickle, rather than her pride?—her shame to bury deep down in her heart, not her pride to call out openly.

Otto seeing her stand thus abashed, felt a new hope springing up. She would not stand thus reddening before him if she did not love him.

"Yes, you love me still—do not deny it." He sprang forward towards her, and would have seized her hands, but she snatched them

away when his fingers had only touched the tips of hers.

"Don't touch me!—don't come near me!" she shrieked, in a voice so shrill that it hardly sounded like her own; and she started back, her proud eyes dilating with a sudden wrathful light, her proud lips quivering with passionate defiance. "No, I do not love you, Baron Otto Bodenbach. I am ashamed of ever having loved you. You are nothing to me but a miserable memory. How dare you approach me in that way? You are the bridegroom of Comtesse Halka Przeszechowska."

Otto shivered, as if on that warm spring day there could be any cold in the air. The recollection of his betrothed touched him like an icicle in the very heat of his passion. He drew back and put up his hand to his head.

"Do not mention her name, I will not hear it. I must have your love again. You must be mine, mine for ever. I will do anything to win it back. I will let fortune go to the winds," and he groaned, and struck his forehead again, talking like a man raving; the passion that was shaking him made him pitiful to behold. He really did believe, blinded as he was now by the glamour of her presence, that fortune and riches were nothing to him.

"You will not let your fortune go to the winds," she answered, still trembling with the vehemence of her words. "You love it too much; and even if you did, even if you gave up everything now, you would never gain me back again—never. I would not take your love again if it was the only love on earth, and if it was to make me the richest woman on earth. I want to cut away every memory of ever having loved you." She turned, as she spoke, to her desk on the table where she had been

writing, and with quick, feverish fingers she opened it and took out some letters and his photograph, which she had long since torn from her diary. He stood by watching her in sullen anger. From the height of excited raving he had fallen to dogged quietude. He believed now that she did not love him.

"There — there — there!" she cried, and threw them on the floor at his feet. The white paper fluttered down and lay undisturbed on the ground. "I have nothing more to do with them; and you will send mine back to me; they cannot stay in your hands when you are a married man."

"Oh, you want to taunt me with my hateful marriage. Do you imagine that there will be anything but wretchedness for me in it? I shall be miserable as a married man."

"But you will be happy as a rich one; you will have fortune, and that is all you want."

"Fortune is nothing without you," he said, but he felt the sting of truth in her words. Fortune was very much to him, but not as much as her love—just then.

"It will give you happiness," she said, more quietly, but with a passing look of scorn; "the sort of happiness you care for."

"But I love you," he said, with a gasp that was almost a sob; and he looked at her again with haggard eyes, knowing that his chance was gone, that his suit was hopeless.

"And you have lost me," she answered, not proudly this time, but sadly; and then in pity for him she turned to go.

"Do not go without saying you forgive me. Can you forgive me, Reata?"

"Yes, I forgive you," she said slowly, stopping and turning at

the door. "It was not your fault if the trial was greater than your strength;" and then lower, half to herself, she added, "I have not forgiven myself for having ever fancied that I loved you."

As she ran down the rickety wooden steps with swift feet, pushing back her hair to cool her face, she saw Arnold not far off. He was walking towards the house; for the last ten minutes he had been pacing up and down, half on guard, half in waiting: he had not told his father of the unexpected arrival. Reata ran past him with her head averted, that he might not read the trouble in her face; but he glanced at her sharply as she passed him, and stood still a minute on the gravel looking after her flying figure till she vanished among the trees. He did not know what had passed within in the sitting-room, but an outline of it he could form in his mind.

The warm May day was dying off into coolness; there were no more checkered lights on the lawn, and only the topmost flowers of the horse-chestnut trees were golden under the last ray of the departing sun. Not even one little sparrow was about now—the top of the garden wall was deserted and silent; they had all gone off to bed, and tucked their heads under their brown wings: they would need to begin their night's rest early, so as to be waking and up next morning betimes, ready to welcome the sun when he came over the distant hills to look at the world again.

Arnold found his brother in the sitting-room, standing near the table, and stuffing away something into the pocket of his uniform—something that rustled like paper.

"Look here, Arnold," said Otto, in a still deeply-agitated voice; "I want you to do something for me. I will send you a sealed-up packet

as soon as I get back to Rzeszów; will you give it to—to her?" he stammered, and looked at his brother.

"To Fraülein Lackenegg?" completed Arnold; "yes, I understand."

"To her, yes: but don't let anybody see it; it would not—not do."

"Make your mind easy," said Arnold, much as Reata said to him five minutes before, and much in the same tone; "nobody shall see it."

"Thank you," said Otto, huskily; then a second after he looked up at his brother, "I suppose there is no hope for me?"

He had not taken Arnold into his confidence before about this matter; he had deceived him along with the others, and as good as told him lies on the subject; but just at this moment an old instinct of boyhood grew alive again. He had always asked Arnold for advice in his scrapes; sometimes not till the last moment, when it was too late to mend, for it was Otto's way to go on neglecting people and leaving them aside when he did not want them, and then, when the need came, to turn to them and throw himself on their mercy with trusting confidence; and when Otto asked for help in that utter abandonment of pride and obstinacy, then he usually got it, even from those he had offended most. Arnold could not help him now, but looking at his younger brother, as he stood there before him, every inch a man, but almost a child in the helpless confidence of his eyes, the elder and stronger man felt himself stirred with a great depth of brotherly affection, and by a very keen pity, which was hardly contempt.

"I cannot do anything for you, Otto. You don't want me to advise

you to break off your engagement? Surely she has not asked you to do so?"

"No, no, she has not, though I would have done it; I told her so."

"You offered to break it off?"

"Yes, I did."

"And you would have married her?"

"Oh, I would do anything to get her back," he said, recklessly; "I was engaged to her before, you know."

"I suspected as much; and she refused now when you offered again?"

"She says she does not love me any more; but I cannot believe, I will not believe it. She used to love me, she told me so often; it must be her pride which will not let me see it. Arnold, what am I to do?"

"It is no use asking me," said Arnold, his face growing clouded. "If you had been open with me long ago, I should never have pressed you about your marriage, much as I should have regretted your losing your fortune through a *mésalliance*; you should have spoken to me sooner, Otto."

Otto made no denial; he looked at his brother with an air of deprecation, which was the same as saying, "Don't scold me!"

Arnold found it no use trying to harden his heart against him. "I would help you now if I could, but I cannot advise you to break your word a second time."

"One thing I must tell you," said Otto, looking up again, "I am not as bad as you think me; I did not break my word to her, she set me free herself because of the conditions of the will."

"She did quite right," said Arnold, gravely.

"And I was a fool to take her at her word, was I not?"

"I cannot say," said Arnold, and he turned away.

PROGRESS.

THE whirligig of Time has brought us at last to a period when Progress may, without extreme rashness, be taken as a theme for discussion—that is to say, when it is not unpardonable sin to presume that there may be two opinions on that subject. Not very long ago the excellence of progress was held to be established on foundations so good and sure that nothing but wantonness, or profaneness, or idiocy, could raise a question concerning it. Of course, nobody was going to waste time in answering ribaldry or drivelling, and so an objector was likely to be very summarily suppressed. He was likely, indeed, to be encountered in a spirit like that which animated Mr Bright recently, when an honourable member of the House of Commons ventured to speak of Free Trade as something short of a divine revelation. But signs are observable which indicate that progress is no longer protected by the taboo, and that a respectful examination of it will not be scouted as blasphemy. The signs which we allude to are patent, not mysterious, signs. ‘Maga’ has received no special inspiration anent them. No still small voice, like that which was vouchsafed to Mr Gladstone on the morning when the Commons rejected his “Gagging Bill,” has whispered that the subject has once more become profane. Perhaps if we attempt a little memoir of Progress, we may, in the course of it, indicate the signs.

To the best of our belief, the name (not the idea) of Progress was first emphasised—first framed and glazed and hung up in the household, as one may say—through a little *rencontre* which occurred in Parliament

some thirty years ago. At that period it was the wont of our present Premier, then Mr Disraeli, to sit (we write figuratively) expectant in his tent, at the door of which tabernacle hung his warlike shield, obvious to the hostile touch of any and every comer. As frequent in the day as those words which comforted Yorick’s ghost did taps ring upon the well-proved escutcheon; and every tap brought forth without fail the owner of the pavilion to do battle with the adventurer, according to his condition—that is to say, to meet him in career as a knight, to fence with him as a gentleman privileged to carry a sword, or to indulge him in a round with the cudgels or the fives, if he happened to be unused to polished warfare. In some exceptional cases it happened that the owner of the shield experienced damage in the encounter; in a few instances there were equal scorings, honourable to both combatants; but, as a rule, he who smote the shield came to pitiable grief,—he was unhorsed and bit the dust, he was neatly run through the body amid the merriment of the honourable ring, or at the best he got his head punched in a manner which a classical language of modern times denominates “a caution.”

Now it happened that the late Sir James Graham one day touched the shield, and that, when he did so, he let drop some expression about “taking his stand upon Progress.” This not very intelligible phrase was the opening in his armour at which the proprietor of the tent aimed his thrusts; and he, before he had done with it, made many passes through it, and rendered it not a little ridiculous. The

defence of it by its inventor was about as appropriate and complete as Corporal Bardolph's vindication of the word "accommodate." It is, however, not so much the event of the combat as the combat itself which we recall; and we revert to it as having brought the word Progress much into fashion.

At that epoch the term Reform had had its day, and had become vulgarised; therefore a new name for the epiphany with which certain luminaries are evermore flooding the world was very acceptable. Most of us remember how general and how earnest was the worship of Progress, until that word also began to be what Mistress Tearsheet calls "ill-sorted"—until, by reason of its popularity, all sorts of heterogeneous things tried to sun themselves in its rays, and every pretender vaunted his own practice or invention as a form of progress. Then Progress in its turn, having been dinned a little too persistently into men's ears, got ostracised. It is falling back to its old workaday position and acceptance; it is out of the Pantheon; and one may criticise it freely without dread of a thunderbolt.

To find the origin of the progressive idea, we have to look back a long way—even to Paradise. But let none assume that Progress is of celestial descent because it is traceable to that happy abode: for we remember that even *there* there was a skeleton in the—no, there was certainly no cupboard, and we believe there was no skeleton, pre-Adamite theories notwithstanding;—let us then correct the expression and say there was a snake in the grass there, which fits in better. Our mother Eve was the first progressionist, and we know who made her so. She, like thousands of her descendants, was deceived as to the

effects of Progress. She was told that she would be "as gods:" she found that she had acquired the art of joining fig-leaves together, with the little offsets of pain, sorrow, and death. This is, we think, hitting the beginning of Progress with sufficient accuracy. Poetic minds have hunted her to other spheres, and shown how she was a plague to demons before man existed: but we profess only to run her to earth.

Such was her beginning; and from that day of the Fall till now, she has been manifesting herself at intervals. We do not care to trace her whole career; but we mark her reappearance at the time of the French Revolution. There must have been something in that, and in the general revolution which it produced, calculated to raise in men's minds the not original idea that they could perfect themselves, and the not modest idea that they would forthwith do it. There was a new departure at the end of last century. The forces which were supposed to have repressed the upward tendencies of mankind had been overborne, and there was no bar to sages and philanthropists having their will. That old-world story of the plain of Shinar was wellnigh forgotten; it occurred to none that it was going to be repeated. And yet it has been repeated—is being repeated. We are getting, not to the skies, but to confusion!

One does not readily realise how it is that an idea of mankind being able to perfect itself now and again gets possession of humanity. Such an idea does, however, seize upon the race at times, and mighty must be its pervading influence; for in the period just gone by it was not only the flighty, the enthusiastic, and the impious who entertained it, but men distinguished for sound

judgment and reflecting power gave it their support. The late Lord Lytton proclaimed his belief in human perfectibility; but one may imagine that he expected the supreme condition to be brought about by means very different from what is ordinarily called Progress. The man who declared that the first Reform Bill was carried by "enormous lying," cannot have seen much connection between political change and faultless beings.

And there were not wanting many men of mark who thought that we might in this world work our way to all goodness, and all knowledge, and all power. Our leading statesmen did not, however, all view the subject in the same light.

Of Lord Palmerston one is disposed to say that he held, not very strongly, the doctrine in question. He told us that we were all born faultless, and that it was entirely matter of our own choice whether we were virtuous or the contrary; but whatever may have been his opinion of our power to do well, he had probably a strong conviction that our wills would take us toward evil. We should choose the broad path as certainly as ducks will take to the water. Hence, perhaps, proceeded his lordship's easy views of life, and the levity with which he regarded things in general.

On the other hand, Mr Cobden believed not only that his fellow-men could be greatly improved, but he thought that he was the sage who could put them in the way of rapid improvement. His discovery was very simple when it was once hit upon; as with Columbus's trick with the egg, the only difficulty was in first finding it out. Wars, Mr Cobden thought, were the great obstacles to the elevation of the species, and he propounded a nostrum for making wars to cease in

all lands. His prescriptions were received with much favour, and very generally followed; but the consequence was that war, which had before afflicted Europe with whips, now began to chastise it with scorpions. War was never, in modern times, more frequent or more desolating than it has been since Mr Cobden unfolded the means of preserving perpetual and universal peace! However, although his great and impudently vaunted specific was no specific at all, Mr Cobden may certainly be classed among those who believed in a progress which would shortly exalt mankind in the scale of beings.

Earl Russell may be set down as one who had not much faith in progress. He used to talk about finality, and said and did many things justifying the supposition that he considered the human race to have reached its zenith in the year 1688.

It is a difficult thing to guess what may be Mr Gladstone's creed concerning progress. Whatever that right honourable gentleman may have said at one period of his career, he has contradicted at another; so that his arguments on any given question neutralise each other, and amount to nothing. In even Mr Gladstone's manner of doing things there is a baffling contradiction; for when he is legislating or otherwise working for us to an end which is to be the joy of the whole earth, he is of an unscripturally sad countenance, and not like a man who is going to produce universal happiness. One doubts, therefore, whether he is himself a thorough believer in all the good which he announces. Nevertheless, it is only fair to say that Mr Gladstone's demeanour is not without precedent among philanthropists. To find a parallel, it

is only necessary to point to an eminent personage, a native of La Mancha, who, though teeming with projects for the good of men, showed a visage which was the reverse of mirthful. These inconsistencies of humanity are things which "no fellow can understand."

We have thought it well to mention these authorities and their views about progress; but, after all, the question must be, not what this or that sage thought of progress, but what progress has done for us since it last came into fashion. Times are not, and for some while they have not been, prosperous. Adversity has come upon us, and has been received in a by no means philosophical spirit. She is regarded as not only an unwelcome, but an unmixed evil. We cannot ascertain by any utterance from the financial, or the mercantile, or the agricultural world, that her uses are held to be sweet. A toad ugly and venomous she is allowed to be; but who bethinks himself of the precious jewel which she wears, unfemininely, *inside* her head?

These hard times are in some respects a satire upon progress; but her apostles will, of course, tell us that they have come in spite of her, and that she goes on her way in spite of them. We confess to not understanding how this can be. That which loses ground, no matter from what cause, is not progress. Stooping to conquer is intelligible; going forward and going backward at the same time is not. A steamship working persistently against the tide, but unable to stem it, may be doing doughtily, but she is losing way. One asks why this is not as plain to progressionists as to the rest of the world? The answer seems to be that they have been able to turn their heads in only one direction. They could, like our first mother, see plainly enough certain

things which they thought they could alter for the better; and they would not believe but that, by making the proposed alteration, they must put the world forward, if only a little. They could not, or would not, see that in effecting the good they might also be creating an evil; and that it was just possible that the evil might more than counterbalance the good; so that the grand result must be retrogression instead of progress.

To apply this. The friends of progress saw plainly enough some years ago—say about 1850—that the world would, sooner or later, be in need of many and various great works and appliances, demanding much labour and large capital. What they could not see was, that the world was not prepared all at once to make such general use of even desirable and convenient things as would insure an immediate profit to those whose capital might be employed in the provision of them. They forgot that mankind, when it has long been running in accustomed lines, is very hard to move out of the well-worn track, even for its own benefit. For, to see and appreciate advantages, and yet not to be ready to seize them suddenly at the expense of the surrender of cherished habits, is an infirmity by no means confined to the lady who gave us her experiences in that respect, but rather a leaning deep-seated in the nature of us all. We are all Medeas when first exhorted to get into an improved groove. By-and-by, it may be, we turn us to our convenience and profit, and submit to have our wheel promoted. But time must be an element in the free and general acceptance of even the best things.

The eye of a progressionist is now—probably it has always been—bigger than another part of him which shall not be mentioned here,

although Menenius Agrippa thought it worthy of some pointed remarks, and although there are said to be in the City some who make a god of it. Your progressionist is, one fears, greedy of results. He overruns the demand. He procures the locking-up of mighty capital in works which cannot return a profit for years—which cannot, in some cases, endure until the time of harvest. The speculations of many of the sagacious projectors will probably be fulfilled some day or other; but that day may be a century off, and the works will begin to be profitable when they who provided them shall be cold in their graves. Said Cowper—

“Choose not alone a proper mate,
But proper time to marry.”

The progressionists should not only devise useful works, but should choose fitting times for executing them.

Unprofitable loans, unprofitable works at home and abroad, unprofitable large companies, unprofitable manufacturing energy, unprofitable commerce, have followed upon this forcing of progress. With our faces toward our goal, and with all our hearts in our work, we have been dropping astern; and not only that, but we have lost for many a day our power of making head. Many a talent lies buried waiting a late resurrection; many a one has been altogether lost. This is not progress, but pseudo-progress.

Then we may reflect how the failures of banks, caused chiefly by failures of other speculations, have aggravated the general losses of the community. And commercial disasters have been passed on to the producers of food and the possessors of houses. It was impossible but that, when the money-getting classes should be straitened, the owners of houses and the owners and tillers

of land should be straitened also. Hence the depression is general.

We have been writing of attempts to hurry on human nature to a happy goal by means of our knowledge, and of the bragging character of the men who are so eager to transform us. It is not for a moment suggested that the arts are slow to improve. We recognise, and rejoice in, the triumphs of engineering, of telegraphy, of exploration, of practical geology, and of many another branch of knowledge which need not be here written at length. This is progress which can be brought to an obvious test and proved. It is progress which never prophesied—never promised that which it was unable to perform; but which went steadily and warily onwards until it produced results far surpassing expectation. Here is progress indeed. It is not of this that we would ask men to doubt, but of the spurious article,—the progress vaunted by political and speculative enthusiasts as destined to bring back the golden age, to regenerate the human race, to make a perfect society. Our powers and conveniences have been multiplied without doubt by the sciences and arts; but morally we cannot be said even to hold our ground: we go backward.

It is a question worthy of consideration whether the advancement of the arts and sciences, wherein we unquestionably do mark progress, has not its debit side in the account, and whether we mortals are on the whole creditors or debtors. In regard to locomotion for instance, the department of science in which, perhaps, we have been most successful, we make our numerous and rapid journeys or voyages in the railways or steamships, travelling luxuriously. How would men of this generation endure the rough conveyance of sixty years ago in

sailing-vessels and stage-coaches? It is to be feared that the *physique* of Europeans generally is not what it was when conveniences did not so abound, when the body was trained to greater endurance, and the mind necessarily enjoyed longer intervals of leisure. The remark is often made that we are living too fast; perhaps we are also living too comfortably.

As to this matter of *physique*, however, there are some startling facts which tell at first view in favour of the present times. We have feats of walking, swimming, and boat-navigation, such as old records do not parallel. If they who achieve these feats can be regarded as fairly representing the civilised races, the decision must be altogether in favour of the present. But it is probable that they are, in the present, exceptional people, and that, as compared with former generations, they do not surpass in power but only in the facility of exhibiting themselves and dispersing abroad their fame. Many a candle may have burnt out under a bushel in old days; while now there is not a rushlight but must have its candlestick and be taken about to shine before men as if it were a planet on its grand tour.

Let us turn to another branch of the subject. The great zeal which was kindled for politically and socially petting the lower, and especially the working, classes of the community, was thought to be a sign of progress. Was it not rather a sign of folly? It makes one think again of poor old Lear and his daughters. The inheritance has been handed over to those who could not claim it of right, who were expected to repay the gift with measureless gratitude, but who have in fact turned the givers out of doors. The poor, dear, simple, honest, plodding workman, what a

whine we raised over him! He wanted only the chance to show that he had all the selfishness, idle disposition, love of indulgence, and entirely class ideas, which some of us had been fond of imputing to employers alone. Workmen, as we now see, were by no means fit to wield the power which has been given to them. They, seeking only immediate and short-lived gratification, have used their advantage so as largely to increase the general losses of the bad times; and they have set a seal on many contractions of industries, which contractions might have been but temporary had the workmen been otherwise disposed. Many sources of wealth have, it may be feared, been dried up for an incalculable time by the rapacity and obstinacy of our workmen. It is needless to add that the portion of the working class which professes to serve us for wages in our houses has become a cause of general embarrassment and of daily trouble to hundreds of thousands.

Of course only good was intended by those who so incautiously put weapons into the hands of the ignorant and unreflecting. But it is but small consolation now to know that the evil which has occurred was undesigned. There it is, and it does not represent progress towards any great result, material or moral. In many respects it has damaged us seriously; and it points to anarchy and violence rather than to perfection. The work-people have not become more happy and contented; but they have become full of new desires, aspiring and unmanageable.

"Well, there may have been a little error about giving the workman his head; but it was an error on the right side," the progressionists may say. "It tended to elevate the men; and if there has

been a small hitch in a particular direction, don't look too exclusively at that, but see how we have raised everybody and everything; look at the moral improvement." We do look for it, but cannot find it. We look at the Report of the Chief Commissioner of Police, and read that "the year [1878] was marked by a considerable increase in crime and drunkenness." It seems that more than 84,000 persons (we follow a statement in the 'Standard' newspaper) were arrested in the metropolitan district for various offences; being an increase of nearly 6000 as compared with the previous year, and of more than 10,000 as compared with the average of the three years ending in 1875. The drunken and disorderly show an increase of 4000 and assaults on the police are in excess. This ought to settle the question of progress in morality, at least as regards the metropolis.

Some well-meaning persons have been endeavouring to repress drunkenness by means of the law. If these philanthropists had endeavoured to make men generally obedient and temperate, they might have succeeded as to this particular point. But it is too much to expect that when men are exhorted to contend for absolute, unreserved, wilful license in everything else, they are going to submit themselves to the pleasure of others in just the very matter in which their affections are most involved and their self-control weakest. If our progressionists wish to control our people in the matter of drinking, they must teach them to be subordinate and respectful as to all matters of general concern. The person who is taught to rant about his rights on every petty occasion is not likely to surrender his right to get drunk. Neither can he who finds the magistrate considerate and tender about wife-beat-

ing be expected to look upon ebriety as a serious offence.

Our political progress, of which we have had nominally so large a measure, pressed down and running over, has brought us to something much beyond rational liberty. It has not put an end to political complaints; but it has given rise to a new evil which threatens to be—nay, which is—most serious. We have been so encouraged to criticise everybody, great and small, that it is now the custom of the uneducated and undiscerning to set up their own judgment above that of the best-informed and most practised. Modesty, or what used to be called submission to superior judgment, is a thing unknown nowadays. Not to ascertain the right and abide by it, but to wrangle and worry and perplex till exhaustion ends the contest, is the established practice.

Authority, in a proper sense, may be said to be wellnigh a thing of the past. Nobody—*i.e.*, nobody who loses—is satisfied with the verdict of a jury or with the decision of a court of law. The appetite for contention has been very carefully stimulated and provided for. Appeal court after appeal court has been created, with the effect of losers being harder to satisfy than they were when these means of appeal did not exist. It is not only where judgment is difficult, or where great issues are involved, that the habit of not resting satisfied obtains; but the most trifling contentions, out of mere temper as it would seem, are carried up from court to court, so as to give the greatest possible amount of trouble and to raise costs. The judges seem to enter with gusto into the humour of the thing. One court delights to overthrow the decision at which another court may have arrived. Thus every encouragement is given to contin-

ued litigation. It would be much cheaper for plaintiff and defendant, and not a bit more speculative, if they would agree to be content with (say) four throws of the dice instead of going into four courts.

Now, when Noakes and Styles have a difference about some eight-penny matter, it may be thought to have received sufficient attention when a jury has come to a decision concerning it, and a judge has made an award. But no: neither Noakes nor Styles (as loser) cares a fig for juries or judges. He will give thrice as much as the subject of dispute to any well-deserving friend; but in a matter of right he'll "cavil on the ninth part of a hair." "The judge," he says, "is a muff, and no lawyer; the jury are a pack of thick-headed louts. He'll bring 'em to their senses!" Would it be any serious restriction on rational liberty if Noakes or Styles were compelled to abide by the decision of the court into which their case had first been taken, and not allowed to occupy more time of public servants with their squabble?

If the law were clear, all courts must in the majority of cases be agreed; and there would, in general, be but small temptation to a suitor who had been once unsuccessful to pay heavily for only a confirmation of the former award. But progress has so muddled and mystified the law, or has so assisted lawyers to mystify it, and so many means are provided of perpetuating even petty disputes, that the result is what we see.

In ecclesiastical matters especially is the practice of endless disputations far too common, and evidently gaining ground. No decision is accepted as sound. Nothing is established; nothing is secure. No two courts can view the same matter in the same light. Contradictions without end occur, to the great

delight of those who are fencing with the law, to the scandal of the country, and to the immense gain of lawyers. Every reversal by one court of the decision of another court, by stimulating the appetite for appealing, tends to make, it must be remembered, fresh work for them of the long robe, and forces from the pockets of clients huge additional gains for the legal profession. A lawsuit, once begun, for however trivial a cause, threatens to grow to a momentous contest, and to be interminable while there remains a penny in the pocket of either litigant. Jarndyce *versus* Jarndyce was an invention of a hardly possible case, to show to what extremes lawsuits could be carried. It is no exaggeration to-day; indeed, we fancy that many real suits surpass it in the very features which the story was intended to caricature. Progress has not led us to make adequate laws for the government of ecclesiastics; neither has it taught us how to remedy the want of adequate laws, now that the want is apparent. With all our progress we know not how to remedy a crying and shameful defect in a province which is all-important. We are waiting to build up, out of precedents in the courts, a new code for the Church—out of precedents which are themselves the issues of such contradictions and vacillations as we have described! If there is anything shaky or immethodical about a bank-note for five pounds, or the mode of presenting or paying a cheque, a dozen legislators are ready with remedies for an evil, the continued existence of which for even another day is intolerable. But in a matter which we must own to touch us immeasurably more nearly than anything commercial can, nobody will be at the trouble of attempting to make our position comprehensible. "Let time shape,

and there an end," is the motto which progress has moulded for our spiritual affairs. Our National Church, indefinite as to its doctrine, unregulated as to its forms, is an institution which we dare not set about putting into a better condition. Here, again, progress is at fault.

The foregoing remarks apply to the Church as it appears only too frequently in the law courts; but there is much more to be said of it under the head of progress. To speak of it in a manner befitting so solemn a subject, and at the same time to properly characterise the conduct of those who have begun, and who are now fomenting, the divisions in the Establishment, is difficult; but it is so by no fault of ours. We have ever wished well to, and in our humble sphere upheld, the National Church; we cannot speak with respect, we can hardly speak with patience, of those of its ministers who are daily drawing attention on themselves by arbitrarily overstepping the bounds by which, for at least several generations, the Church has been contained. Their absurdities, their narrow-mindedness, and the ruinous tendencies of their practices, chase away the respect which one would desire to feel for them as clergymen. We are remarking on conduct, not on convictions. The new doctrines—they may be revivals, but they are new to men of the present day,—the new doctrines may be quite right, or the persuasions of the Church as it was at the beginning of this century may be right. But whichever may ultimately prevail, that which, rightly or wrongly, has been established, should be respected and followed until something better can be generally received in lieu of it.

We know very well that, in re-

gard to secular matters, it is not the practice for men to set at naught laws which they happen not to approve of. They may write or speak against such laws, or they may take steps for inducing their countrymen to agree in condemning such, or in agitating for their repeal or amendment. Those are methods allowed to all her Majesty's subjects. But the objectors do not presume, because they disapprove or dislike such laws, to disobey them. It is the clergy alone who set the example of defying laws which they happen not to like or not to approve. It can hardly be edifying to listen to the spiritual exhortations of a priest who has been for the last hour and half coolly setting at naught the law of the land and the ordinances of the Church of which he professes to be a minister. Every law which has been passed by Parliament, and assented to by the sovereign, should be binding on every one of her Majesty's subjects. There may be objections taken to the operation of the law itself, or the ground on which it was made, or to the legislators who made it—and such objections may possibly be valid, and afford good reason for altering the law—but they can form no excuse for violating the law. When they who are not content with a law happen to be a minority of the nation, and therefore unable to alter an obnoxious edict, it is manifestly their duty to submit to the will of the majority and to obey the law.

Our present purpose, however, is not to point out their duties to citizens, but to examine how far the actual condition and position of the National Church warrant us in boasting of having made progress for many years past.

The indifference with which the laity of this country commonly

regard contentions between the Church and the law has been remarked on before to-day. It is not new; but has it decreased during the recent years of so-called progress? Everything around us suggests the answer, No. The laity have not become a whit more alive to their privileges as time has rolled on. They feel no jealousy when the term "Church," which comprehends all within its pale, whether clerical or lay, is usurped by the ministers of the Church. Nay, the laity, through ignorance or inadvertence, often use the misnomer of "the Church" when they mean the clergy. Altogether, Church regulation is lamentably feeble and disgraceful to us.

To such remarks as ours it may possibly be replied that there are thousands in the country who regard the decadence of the National Church as a mark of progress. "It is," they say, "the earnest wish of us, who claim to be the enlightened and progressive portion of the community, to get rid of our old-world Church. It is in itself a bar to progress, and we shall get on much better and much faster after it shall have been swept away." This, however, is no answer to our argument. We do not here pronounce on the question whether the Church should be maintained or not; and we admit that the clergy are taking infinite pains to convert those who have hitherto been ardent supporters of the Establishment into enemies or supine members. But this has nothing to do with the lawless condition of the Church. We may take credit for doing away with an Establishment which has become obsolete: we can take none for being incapable of managing or regulating an Establishment which we profess to maintain. It is our helplessness in respect of the recalcitrant clergy which is disgraceful

to all alike, a sign that our vigour is relaxing, a contradiction of the claims of progress. We remember one of the most troublesome of our disobedient ministers to have said, while he was by every unworthy device wearying out those who were intrusted with the administration of the law, that he was being persecuted. The meaning of which phrase was, we presume, that a parson ought to be allowed to break the laws in peace, and that to disturb him in the violation of them is persecution.

Second to only the subject of religion is the subject of medical science. If we could register valuable progress in that direction, there would be some compensation for shortcomings in other quarters. But where shall we find evidence of progress? Medicine moves in a circle. There has been for the last fifty years very little in it that was new, and there is much reason to fear that what little may have been new has not been true. Revivals there may have been of practices which had their run a century or more ago, and are now being brought out again to amuse this generation: but that does not mean progress, it means only a change of fashion.

There is not a person now in the downhill of life but who must recollect when the principles now in the ascendant were dominant once before. Half a century ago, say in 1825, a starving system of diet was in fashion, and was vaunted as the great secret of preserving and restoring health. "Live on sixpence a day—and earn it," was a maxim in universal favour, thought to be potent against the most violent or the most insidious forms of disease. Anon it was discovered that the whole community was being wasted by abstinence, and the cure of all disease involved a generous—nay, a

very high—diet; and it was explained to us that we were all starving ourselves. We have now reverted again to the starving system. The lancet, which was in such universal use in last century, has not yet been reintroduced; but there is no sort of security that it will not reappear as soon as its former reign may be sufficiently forgotten to allow it to come back as a novelty. For fashion, not science, rules everything in medicine. One lucky man with a good name starts away on a tack which is oblique to the prevailing mode. His good fortune is noised abroad, and the whole pack follows him, shouting his cries and reciting his maxims, until another bold and lucky innovator is able to turn the current once more and lead off on a new course. Is this a hard judgment on the profession? We think not. But let us consider one of the practices to which we have alluded, and ascertain how it may support or contradict the criticism that we have ventured to pass. Blood-letting, which was a universal practice a century ago, and which is altogether discountenanced now, must be either right or wrong. If it was right, then the whole profession is to-day following like a flock of sheep an erroneous and vicious fashion. If it is wrong, still, while it was in fashion, all followed it without hesitation. If it had been only an accidental error in the career of true science, some able and honest men would have lifted up their voices against it. The Faculty would have been divided, and truth would at last have prevailed. But there is not the least reason to suppose that, until the fashion had pretty near worn itself out, any one doubted of the efficacy of blood-letting. All went for it as unanimously as all now oppose it. Nobody was against it then; no-

body is for it now. This looks much more like ignorance guided by fashion than like science searching for solid truth.

We are aware that the opinion which we have ventured to express has been met by an explanation intended to vindicate the purely scientific practice of medical men in last century and in this. "Mankind are not the same now," says the apologist, "as they were a hundred years ago. Copious bleeding on almost all occasions was the right thing for constitutions of that day; but modern constitutions require a totally different treatment. Blood-letting was salutary then; but it is decidedly destructive now."

This generation is expected, then, to believe that habitually and copiously to deplete their veins was good for mankind seventy years ago, but that in the present day it is undesirable to deprive a human being of a drop of his blood! Be it remembered that it is not a modification of a practice that is under consideration, but a total reversal of it. It might be intelligible that blood-letting is not as extensively or as profusely required as it was three generations ago; but that is not at all the doctrine that we are taught. Modern practice is, in regard to blood-letting, diametrically opposed to the practice of the eighteenth century. Does anybody believe that we are so entirely unlike our fathers and grandfathers as to require a diametrically opposite treatment to that which was good for them? The whole race cannot have so changed in this remarkable particular!

The same defence may be made of the alternative starving and feeding; but can we accept the argument? Was there a radical change in Englishmen's bodies from 1800 to 1840; another from 1840 to 1865; and another from the last

date to 1879? If not, why does medicine vacillate so? Two doctors manage to meet each other with steady countenances; and we have no doubt two augurs could always manage to do the same, notwithstanding Cicero's jest on the subject. Men can compose their facial muscles when their bread depends on their so doing.

We adopt to-day what we discarded yesterday, and esteemed the day before. The lancet will have its turn again, without doubt. Some bold man will open a vein and effect a cure. He will vaunt his method, and the profession will run after him. It is in the nature of man to be fond of novelty; more especially is it in the nature of sick man to be eager for change. The invalid can judge of the insufficiency of that which is, and hail with delight something different from the long unsuccessful remedies—something which once more revives the hope of recovery. Thus, any practice which has been long enough in abeyance to have been forgotten, can be revived and go through another probation, to be again rejected, and to be superseded by some other revival, possibly by the very fancy which supplanted it before.

Unlike medical fancy, science advances by safe and sure steps—not accepting any fact or doctrine until well satisfied of its worth, and then not easily surrendering it again. The inductive method would spoil all the harvests now derivable from remedies and doctrines temporarily popular. It needs only to compare any science (take natural history, for instance) which has been surely if slowly making way during a given term of years, with medicine, to perceive by what haphazard stages, by what guess-work, by what change for mere change's sake, by what un-

philosophical motions, the latter maintains its course. And in saying this, let us not, for the sake of scoring a point, be so unjust as to keep out of sight the difficulties whose operation, probably, is accountable for many medical vagaries. Medicine cannot be, except under severe restrictions, an experimental science. The practitioner must observe fleeting facts while engaged in the cure of disease,—the cure and not the observation being, for the moment, his principal care. He cannot prolong the diseased condition for the sake of becoming learned concerning it. His treatment is subject to disadvantage from the recklessness, folly, wilfulness, or inaccuracy of his patients; and these he cannot control. He must, in the majority of cases, live by his art, not for his science. He must make his practice as little disagreeable as possible. For his patient's sake as well as for his own he must make no confession of ignorance: one great agent towards cure is lost if once confidence is weakened. The physician does not work upon inert matter; he has moral as well as material facts to regard; and as no two human forms ever are exactly alike, so, we may fairly presume, no two human constitutions can be exactly alike—this fact in itself necessitating some uncertainty in the science.

But after every allowance has been made, there is still no excuse for medicine wheeling in flighty orbits, instead of advancing in a decorous and steady career. If its living subjects are immensely varied, they are at the same time immensely numerous, and afford instances in plenty from which can be drawn general conclusions. Its own votaries, also, are more numerous and widespread than those of any science whatever. Its movement cannot be other than slow; yet it may be

sure. One established truth is better than all the *ad captandum* nostrums in the world; and one sees not why truth may not be built upon truth in medicine as in other branches of knowledge.

But it is in politics that we find the greatest boasters about progress. It is through enlightened legislation (*i.e.*, the legislation favoured by the party of progress) that the world is to advance to perfection. Throughout the greater part of the present century, progressionists were in the ascendant, and were eternally reminding us of the good seed which they were sowing. It is reasonable to expect that by this time, if ever, there should be some show of fruit. We look around us, and what do we see? we ask for testimony, and what do we hear? A dead-lock is apparent in the business of the Legislature: from all sides is reiterated the assertion that parliamentary government is on its trial. Those who say and write this so frequently, do not add anything to the remark; but the frequent repetition shows that there is something behind which nobody likes to be the first to say. And that "something" is, that parliamentary government has been found wanting. Behold here a discovery not very flattering to progress. Parliament, which was to set everything else right, has become, through progress, wellnigh unworkable. The evil is not an accident which can be charged upon the "depression," or upon the seasons, or upon any particular men. The case of Parliament was never before such; therefore, as to its working power, and as to the respect which it can command from the country, it is much lower than it has been since the days of the Tudors. When Cromwell cleared the House of Commons by force, he, in doing so, bore testimony to its power in its own province. It

knew how to maintain its influence—it was a check upon his arbitrary proceedings, and he suppressed it with his men of war. Things are very different now: it is running down through internal disorganisation and decay.

It is another way of stating the case to say that Parliament has no longer firmness or moral courage. The cause of this it is not easy to point out. One means of bringing the infirmity to light has been the election by the constituencies of men belonging to a very low class. These, by straining parliamentary forms to their utmost, have shown that Parliament cannot bear any strain at all. The regulations were made for gentlemen, and will not restrain those who choose to take every means possible for resisting or evading them.

There is, of course, some reason for the feebleness which appears in our "High Court." We have said above that we cannot explain this lamentable infirmity; but we may just suggest one possible cause of the House of Commons being so incapable of self-regulation. Is it not supposable that the ballot may have a great deal to do with intimidating individuals, and so with imparting timidity to the whole assembly? At present no member can tell by what party or in what interest he has been returned. He never knows how his vote (except upon a decidedly party question) may affect his unknown supporters, and operate at the next election. He is pretty easy about his general politics; but an incautious vote touching freedom of debate, or directed against a knot of noisy senators, might, for aught he knows, endanger his seat. The risk is too great for his moral courage to face, and so he only fumes in silence while the House is being turned into a bear-garden. All side issues,

or what he would call such, he thinks it safer to avoid. If this be so, the ballot, which decidedly, as we believe, was intended as progress, has brought about something very like retrogression. A member no longer knows what interests he represents.

It is now a proven fact that rules for the House of Commons must be something more than resolutions for its guidance. They must be stringent and ingenious prescriptions, framed for the express purpose of baffling perverse natures who take delight in obstructing the proper business of the Legislature. And probably they will not answer the intended purpose unless the breach of them shall be followed by a penalty, and that penalty shall be sternly inflicted. For with confusion of face we must remember, that we can no longer look to proper feeling or a sense of decency to set matters right. Either, punishment must cure the evil, or it is incurable. We are familiar with the dispositions of certain persons who delight in damaging works of art which may be provided for the general amusement and instruction, who break lamps and railings, who pelt passenger trains, having, as far as can be ascertained, no incitement to do so but the love of mischief. If there were any region from which we might have felt certain that this wanton spirit would have been excluded, it is the House of Commons. But there it is, not only present but dominant. The most notable examples of wanton and mischievous perversity are to be found in the Honourable House. It seems pitiful to be taking daily vengeance on the boys of the street when older and more mischievous "boys" daily insult the House of Commons with impunity.

After all, the licence enjoyed by obstructive members of the House

is not itself the evil which troubles us. It is only a symptom, the *reductio ad absurdum* which makes the existence of incapacity apparent to the general eye. The obstructionists are but the sores and blotches on the surface, which prove that beneath the surface there is widespread disease. There must have been deep-seated disorder before obstructionists could have had a chance of trying their pranks: flies do not create corruption; they appear when it is already present. We must look deeper than the daily obstructions if we would understand the retrograde condition of Parliament.

Before honourable members took to wilfully stopping useful business, the practice largely obtained of allowing paltry matters to usurp the place of important ones, and of taking up the time of the Legislature in debating the merest trifles. If the day were three times as long as it is, and if a generation could last as long as in the days of Enoch, there might be nothing ridiculous in this. For discussion, even in small things, is often profitable; and if time can be found for it, there should be no disposition to restrict it.

But our days are but a span long, whether we speak of the earth's revolution or our own lives. Only a limited amount of work can be done by one set of men. It is reasonable, therefore, that the highest and gravest public court should confine its attention to matters of deepest importance, and should relegate minor subjects to inferior assemblies. There are always frivolous people who imagine that their own crotchets are the noblest studies on which the human mind can employ itself; and these would never willingly allow their hobbies to be put aside for height or depth, for principalities or powers, for life or death. But a legislative assem-

bly, properly qualified for its work, would, with a strong hand, reject all business which might be beneath its cognisance. It would sweep away all pretext for wasting valuable time in bald disjointed chat, or in worse than that.

Is it necessary that Ministers should be subjected every day to a series of questions? At present questions are asked, for various reasons. Some are important and of much general interest, others are of very trifling account. Many are put in consequence of statements, entirely unauthenticated, which may have appeared in the newspapers. A great many are put simply to annoy or embarrass Ministers; often they are intended merely to insult the men who have to answer them. "Have you not been jobbing, or peculating, or lying?" or, not unfrequently, "Do you not intend to cheat, or lie, or misappropriate?" for to ingenious insolence, what a man has not done may be made as good a handle for insulting him as what he has done.

Jones, by some freak of the ballot-box, which he understands as little as anybody, has found himself one day an honourable member. He has never descried an opportunity adapted, in his opinion, for demonstrating to the august assembly his peculiar talents, of which, when aptly paraded, he does not think meanly at all. The session is running out while Jones waits his occasion, and he is face to face with the danger of having to go back to his constituents an undistinguished politician. A modest representative, Jones thinks, may meet the kind of fate which has been by another person (no acquaintance of Jones) denounced against rapid poets,—he will go to the wall, men, gods, and columns consenting; or, as Jones puts it, electors, party leaders, and news-

papers not caring a—well, not caring; why does Jones use an expletive? The thought of this danger soon brings him to a resolve. Daring greatly, he says that if the occasion will not come to Jones, Jones will go to the occasion, ay, and be equal to it—there! Accordingly he, having always attentively perused the 'Daily Snare,' his oracle, now takes to studying it intensely (as the new phrase is); he turns its pages with a nocturnal and a daily fist. "Ha, ha! what is this, eh?" says Jones one night which he has toiled through to the small hours of morning, and as yet taken nothing. "What is this? this looks like a matter of some importance, and not one of our numskull rulers perceives the gravity of the situation. Well, rest you easy, gentlemen; you will soon know that everybody is not asleep." The pearl of price which Jones, and Jones only, has appreciated, is an announcement that Russia is maintaining a flotilla on the Caspian Sea. This, he opines, is a profound and insidious scheme for suddenly breaking into the Mediterranean. While we are assiduously watching the coasts of Turkey and Egypt, our vigilant foe is quietly preparing to checkmate us. The flotilla will be between us and our charge before we can say "Jack Robinson," as the sailors have it. By Jove, what a peril! what a near thing! only Jones is alive to it at last. He mentions his discovery at his dinner-table, where Mrs J. and every one else are shocked and impressed by the discovery, but somewhat calmed by the assurance that Jones will not let the matter sleep, never fear. Jones's confidants at the club (it is Wednesday night) are equally shocked, and similarly reassured. On Thursday Jones launches his notice at the Foreign Minister. Jones will demand to-morrow whether the

right honourable gentleman is aware of a flotilla being collected in the Caspian; and if so, to be informed as to any provision which may have been made to protect the Levant in case of a sudden descent of the Russian flotilla attempting to separate us from Turkey and Egypt. There is a murmur among Jones's associates, which intimates that he has made a hit; there are a few little laughs, which seem to say that the laughers know Jones to be chaffing, but don't exactly catch the point of the joke; while about the House generally are looks of intelligence which Jones doesn't see. On the whole, he is immensely satisfied with his achievement, and is beginning to anticipate the moving of a vote of censure, when suddenly the Minister rises, and says that he has no objection to answering the hon. member's question at once. He is quite aware of the flotilla in the Caspian; her Majesty's Government have not taken any step to prevent the flotilla from breaking into the Mediterranean. Jones is now puzzled, for a loud laugh resounds from many parts of the House, not at all the utterance which he intended to provoke. He is angry, and about to give notice of another question for to-morrow, but thinks he may as well consult his friends first, as the levity of the House, as well as the indifference of the Government to our interests, must be reprov'd. One of Jones's allies says he is blest (or otherwise) if he doesn't think the Caspian is separated by a tract of land from the Mediterranean, and there's no direct passage. Stuff! says Jones. But they get the maps, turn to the indices, find the Caspian, and do not find any outlet at all. Its waters are like the great ideas in Jones's brain; they are there, but cannot get out. Jones talks of citing Messrs Wyld,

Arrowsmith, Keith Johnston, and others whose names are on the title-pages of atlases, to the bar of the House, to answer for breach of privilege in not having shown in their maps the way out of the Caspian; but this froth subsides, of course, and there is a jest against Jones.

Mr Sniffit—a very different person from Jones—boasts that he belongs to no party, but thinks that, for all that, he has done, and will do yet, some good in his generation. He is celebrated for discovering the most extraordinary things, all more or less inimical to freedom and justice. He has no ally, or at any rate very few allies. Nobody suppresses his laugh when Sniffit walks up the nursery of a larger mammal. Indeed some fun is expected whenever he is on his legs. But Sniffit has had a bit of lucky inquisition once or twice in his life, and has been quite convinced of his usefulness. It is too much to expect the appearance of a nugget at every stroke of the tool. And so Sniffit goes on, certain that his diggings will be profitable again ere long. "Is it true," asks Sniffit suddenly of the Colonial Secretary, "that five negroes were recently sold in the market at Barbadoes? and did this infamous iniquity take place while the Secretary to Government, the Speaker of the House of Assembly, and the Chief Justice of the island were calmly looking on, indifferent to, or rather abetting, the transaction? Honourable gentlemen might be amused, but he, Sniffit, had reason to believe that the English public were cruelly deceived as to the real condition of things in our plantations. We fancied that we had established the rule of justice, liberty, and——"

Sniffit is stopped by the Chair, and reminded that he cannot make a speech on the occasion. He apologises, being a not disorderly

person, and says he will reserve his remarks until the time shall come for a motion, which he foresees that it will be necessary for him to make, unless, as is probable, an abler advocate should see— He is stopped again and subsides. Three days later, he is informed that the Minister is aware of no transaction such as Sniffit has described: he does not believe that it ever took place. He will, however, make inquiries. Sniffit begs that he will not trouble himself to do so, as he, Sniffit, has learned by later advices that the whole story was a mistake. He is a conscientious man, and does not intend to be troublesome, only to be useful.

But for really smart questioning Ranker is the man. What a world of meaning is there in one of his interrogatories! "Is it intended," asks Ranker, "to credit the public with the interest of certain terminable annuities which fell in six weeks ago; and if so, when and how? Is the Minister aware that to misappropriate public money is a high crime and misdemeanour?" Again, Ranker will ask, "How was the statement that a certain appointment had been made strictly according to routine to be construed? A routine might be very bad. It might be the routine for all public appointments to be made to further the private views of a person in office." An indignant Minister has got to stand up and answer these vulgar insults in calm and courteous language. He can no longer imprint the answer upon Ranker's person, or dare that incisive person to the field. If he could, it is more than suspected that the character of Ranker's queries would be different; but the House has guaranteed security to the asker of such, and Ranker revels in the licence. He knows, of course, that no useful end can

possibly be served by his conduct. Certainly not; but there is a natural brutality in Ranker's disposition which he cannot forbear to indulge. It is the pleasure of Ranker to be not only politically opposed to the Administration, but to cherish a personal and insatiable hatred against every member of it. Of course, unhappy Ministers know very well in what light Ranker regards them; but it is not Ranker's way to speak his sentiments once for all and have done with speaking them. He is for ever repeating the assurances of his distinguished detestation, and he is more especially moved to do this whenever a Ministerial success or merit causes less bitter minds to applaud them. It does not occur to Ranker that his adversaries are capable of enjoying a quiet satisfaction, and that every one of his ebullitions has a silver lining to their view, inasmuch as it convinces them how intensely Ranker is exercised by their well-doing and their continuance in power. Jones and Sniffit are tiresome fools; Ranker is a blackguard.

But the question is, whether an immense advantage might not be gained for the advancement of real business if Jones, Sniffit, and Ranker were all obliged to shut up. We can, however, take all classes of questions together, and ask whether the questioning cannot be managed so as not to take up the time of Parliament. Most, if not all, of the questions are answered from the records of the public offices. Notice has first to be given of them, and when the notice has expired, they are repeated and answered. Now, why could not the notices be given to persons specially appointed to receive them in a side chamber? If this were done, the course of obtaining the answer would be exactly what it is now. And a further economy of the time of

Parliament might be effected by the answer being delivered to the questioner by the same official who might have originally received the question. Thus the whole system of question and answer might go on collaterally with the statements and debates usually conducted in the House. But the system suggested is a muffled system. How would the public anxiety, which these questions are understood to represent, be allayed, if this quiet and *quasi* private method were adopted? The answer is, that the public is informed at present only through the press; and every question and the answer to it might be published as accurately and fully under the scheme proposed as under that at present in use.

The plan of not putting the questions in open Parliament, where they can be put to Ministers personally, would most likely have the effect of materially reducing the number of them. The pleasure of asking the captious and insolent queries would be entirely lost if the whole process were conducted in writing; and the questioners under such circumstances would probably, in most instances, not care to put them.

The House might conveniently discard a great many subjects, besides questions, which at present occupy its time. It will have to restrict its business, to uphold its own dignity, and to maintain its worth in the estimation of the country, or it may find the ground sliding from under it in some unforeseen way. If it cannot prevent such a land-slide, far less will it be competent to check one that has already commenced. Should the slide begin, we shall have advanced a step towards anarchy, which the most sanguine of our perfectionists will hardly mistake for progress.

The sort of licence which now

obtains is something very different from rational liberty. Locke, it will be remembered, in his chapter on Liberty, says that it is a contemptible freedom which only enables a man to play the fool. And a look round should convince us that it is a freedom of the kind which he stigmatises to which progress has brought us. Nobody will submit himself to another; our whole lives are taken up with interminable discussions; and nothing, great or small, can be regarded as determined or established.

Now we shall never induce silly or vicious people to refrain from being tedious or troublesome: the only chance of silencing them lies in depriving them of their opportunity of being so. And that, in some way or other, will, we doubt not, be done. Our existing powers may do it if they have the necessary energy, courage, and tact. If they are not able to do it, the public nevertheless will not allow its work to stand still on that account, but will, from some of its resources, find actors who will take the lead away from the incessant talkers. When *tekel* is glaring at us from the wall, the dominion will pass into new hands. As Burke foresaw that anarchy in France must end in military despotism, so we may expect some rather rude disturbance of our aimless talk. It is immaterial whether an outside multitude overawe our rulers, as in France, or whether they themselves bring business to a dead-lock by extending unlimited complaisance to prozers and obstructionists. The result is the same; matters of moment do not receive due attention. We can do nothing but tie knots in every simple process of business, and somebody assuredly will cut the knots and push from their places the spinners thereof.

The reaction (supposing that we

are not warned in time) will be violent and unwelcome. It will probably not confine itself to remedying defects and giving vigour to business. The swing of the pendulum the other way will take us much farther than we care to go. We may find an iron collar restraining liberty, and allowed to do so because liberty, having degenerated into licence, has become intolerable. But we may yet be wise in time; we may be our own physicians; we may stop practices which are neither profitable nor healthy. May such be the way we shall take. Only, whatever may eventually be our road out of the difficulty, let us not satirise with the name of progress the ill-advised courses which have brought us into it.

Talkers and experimentalists have had their day, and have proved themselves to be worse than unprofitable. Practical men are wanted—men not given to much speaking, but able to discern between the greater and the less, able to detect imposture and evil counsel, and courageous enough to put down hurtful practices. As, according to the Vicar of Wakefield, the man who marries and brings up a family is of more real value in the world than he who only talks of population, so now the man who can govern, who can stop senseless twaddle, and can get our institu-

tions into working order, will be worth ten thousand professing progressionists who promise Elysium and put us on the road to Chaos.

Human nature, we may rely on it, is not yet sufficiently spiritualised to be trusted with unlimited freedom. We require to be restrained and guided as much as ever we did. There is hardly any situation in which we might not profitably be made to feel a greater responsibility for what we may do, and be reminded that there are others in the world besides ourselves.

One of the first steps towards the amendment of things is to acquire the conviction that they are not as good as they may be, or as they may be represented to be. So we have invited our readers to a contemplation of several matters, touching us very nearly, which do not appear to thrive. We ask them to forget for a while the sounding phrases by which it is customary to deceive them as to the real condition of things; to accept no poisonous nostrum on the specious recommendations of interested advocates; and to reflect how little moral advancement our race has been able to make for itself since it made its first attempts; and how much deeper than politics can reach, it must go before there is a chance of change worthy the name of Progress.

BUSH-LIFE IN QUEENSLAND.—PART I.

I.—JOHN WEST SETS OUT ON HIS TRAVELS.

THE good ship *Marie Hamilton*, an Aberdeen clipper, 700 tons burthen, bound for Sydney, is forging her way down the Channel with a fair wind in her topsails. The pilot has gone on shore, and with his departure the last adieu to England has been spoken. The green slopes of Sussex are sinking over the quarter. Beachy is already behind; and if the passengers can catch the Needles before nightfall, they will have had their last look of their fatherland. Most of them are too full of the parting to speak much. Remembrances of friends left behind crowd their memories, and the receding shores give a point to the poignancy of their parting regrets. To-morrow it will be different, when there is only the wide sea to greet the eye on coming on deck. Then men's minds must turn perforce to the new land whither Fortune has beckoned them with smiles that, in too many cases, may turn out to have been delusive. Then the life of the voyage will have begun: friendships will be formed, the seeds of enmities sown, and the social organisation of the floating microcosm will enter upon its three months' course of development.

John West leans over the side; and as the lights fade in the loom of the darkening coast, his whole life seems to come up before him and fade also into the past. He thought of the fond mother who had been called away too soon, before she could see her boy ripening into manhood; of the father whose naturally feeble constitution had scarcely rallied from the shock of her loss, but whose tender affection

and care had been exerted to their utmost, so that John might never feel his loss. Though of a good family, Ambrose West had been only a poor curate in a manufacturing town, who had all his life to struggle with poverty, and who had been indebted for the means of giving his son a good education to the bounty of a female relation, who had accidentally seen the handsome young lad, and had bequeathed his father, in trust for him, a sum of £1500. How he might best turn this legacy to his boy's account was a thought ever present in Mr West's mind, and his anxiety was quickened all the more by a consciousness that his own end was rapidly approaching. That his son should not have to live like himself—a penniless scholar—he was determined; and his acquaintance with an old schoolfellow who had made a fortune in Australia led him to think of a career in that country for John. Mr Cosgrove, who at first had been inclined to throw cold water on the clergyman's scheme, readily undertook to be John West's patron when he heard that the lad would have some small capital to invest in the colony. "Australia is the finest field in the world for a young man with a little money," Cosgrove had said with enthusiasm. "You buy your sheep or cattle, travel them on to a magnificent country, lease it from the Government for a mere trifle, and in a few years your sheep and cattle will have multiplied six or eight times over, and you are a made man. Mere accumulation will make you a rich man. You live the life of a prince,—out on the green

downs all day, riding through the forests, and home at night to your comfortable bunk, turn in, and you sleep like a top."

This prospect did much to reassure Mr West of his son's future, and he could look forward to the end, which was now close at hand, with a feeling of more cheerfulness. There were many points in Mr Cosgrove's character that did not recommend themselves to Mr West; but he could make allowances for his neighbour's roughness and vulgarity, as the crust under which lay a spirit of honesty and fair dealing. When Mr West died, John was scarcely seventeen, and he at once passed under the guardianship of Mr Cosgrove. Neither John West nor his father had much knowledge of Mr Cosgrove's colonial career, or of the way in which he had accumulated his fortune. But while John is thus leaning over the side of the Marie Hamilton watching the night settle down upon the bank of gloom which is all that is now left of the English coast, we shall give a few particulars regarding the man who is now our adventurer's guardian. He had, as a boy, been a school-fellow of Mr West, and had gone out to California when the discovery of gold first attracted a rush of emigration in that direction. He had made money, but had been victimised by a partner of superior cleverness if not of more honesty than himself. Attracted by the glowing accounts of the wealth of New South Wales which followed the famous discovery of gold by Hargraves in that colony, Cosgrove was next drawn towards the new El Dorado, taking with him about nine hundred pounds—the proceeds of his Californian enterprise. In the new colony his previous experience stood him in good stead; and after engaging in many opera-

tions of land-jobbing, money-advancing, and other dealings of doubtful character, he soon found himself fairly on the road to wealth. He had married meanwhile; but his wife had died and left him with one son—a boy called Ralf; and soon after, Cosgrove once more looked around him for a mate by whose means he might manage to raise himself another step in the social ladder.

His choice fell upon a young widow lady of good family though rather slender means. Her husband, a young and promising Government official, had been accidentally killed by a fall from his horse, leaving his young wife and her little girl Ruth, an infant in arms, to make the most of the small sum he had been able to save. She was received in the best society which the capital of New South Wales afforded; and in marrying her, the wily squatter looked forward to a more extended field of labour than he had as yet been able to operate upon. His wealth, address, and rather presentable appearance, procured for him a favourable termination to a suit which, as far as the poor lady knew, she had every reason to regard as a desirable one, but which could only have an unfavourable ending. Not long after the marriage, through his wife, he induced a cousin of hers, a young man of considerable wealth, to emigrate to Australia. Cosgrove had shortly before this sold his original property and bought another, much larger, chiefly on bills, his money being mysteriously disposed of, no one knew how. His name could have procured advances from the banks to an almost indefinite amount. He had laid a trap for some one, and his wife's cousin walked into it.

Greed of gold, and Cosgrove's specious arguments, induced him to

place a large amount of cash in the farmer's hands as part payment of a half-share in the station, which had never been paid for; and the utterly inexperienced one hugged himself in the expectation of untold wealth. To his intense astonishment, he was awakened from this delusion about a year afterwards by his partner, who coolly announced himself a ruined man; finished up by informing him that he could not meet his bills—that the mortgagees had foreclosed, and were now about to take possession. The unsuspecting youth at first thought a joke was intended, and some time elapsed before he actually realised the ghastly truth.

"Do you mean to say that the station was not yours when I bought half of it?"

"Well, it was mine to a certain extent. I bought it on advances from the banks, hoping to clear off the debt by degrees. Depreciation in wool, interest and compound interest, have not only prevented that, but it has put me some thousands in debt; and as I told you, the mortgagees are sending up to take possession."

"But they shan't get possession," returned the young man, alarmed and growing angry; "I own an interest in the property. I won't be swindled out of my money. Let them pay that back to me, and I'll go. I hold your bond of partnership. I dare them to set foot on the place while I am here."

"Listen," said the other; "you had better destroy that little paper."

"I shall do nothing of the kind. I shall publish it in every newspaper. Though you have married my cousin, I'll proclaim your treachery everywhere. I'll——"

"Hold on," rejoined his quondam partner, serenely surveying his victim; "I have no money—overdrawn my account long ago—every

one knows that. I owe about £10,000. The mortgagees are willing to give me a clearance when I give up the station. Should it come to their ears that you are my self-acknowledged partner, you will find yourself compelled to pay the remaining money you possess into their hands to liquidate my debts. Now hold your tongue, and burn your bond—first loss is best loss."

The force of this argument struck the dismayed young man so strongly that, feeling himself quite helpless, though raging inwardly, he submitted to his fate.

Cosgrove retired for some time into private life, but before long emerged again, brighter and evidently richer, as the possessor of a station in the more northern portion of New South Wales, which subsequently came to be known as the colony of Queensland.

In his new property he may be supposed to have succeeded; for on his return to England, after the death of his second wife, whose gentle heart had never been able to get the better of her husband's unscrupulousness, he was apparently a wealthy and prosperous gentleman. In his house John had spent a few weeks after his father's death, and had learned to like Ruth, who had all the sweetness and affection of her mother's character, and to thoroughly detest Ralf, who, to a naturally vicious disposition, developed among the rough characters of a bush-station, had added still more objectionable qualities, caught up from the society of stable-helpers and betting-men, since his arrival in England. John West's intercourse with the young Australian had been far from pleasant, and he had had one occasion to enforce good manners upon him by a sound drubbing. But Mr Cosgrove was anxious that he should

start, and the days of mourning were scarcely accomplished when John found his passage taken on a Sydney ship, and himself hurried off, in company with his dog Spot—the gift of a lad who was Ruth's groom, and whom John had protected at his own personal peril from the tyranny of her brother—with a letter to Mr Cosgrove's superintendent at Ipswich, in Queensland, and a draft, payable to himself, on Messrs Bond and Foreclose, Mr Cosgrove's agents in the capital of New South Wales. As for his money, Mr Cosgrove had undertaken to invest the sum in the way most profitable for giving him a

start when he had learned his duties.

And so John looked over the side of the *Marie Hamilton*, and thought of his dead father and of Ruth, to whom he felt all the fervour of a boyish attachment, and of Cosgrove and Ralf, of the old life that he was leaving, and the wonders of the new world that was before him, until the light was swung from the mast, and the watch was set, and passengers were beginning to go below and make for their berths. The wide ocean was around, night was above, and Old England was now far away on the lee.

II.—ON BOARD THE *MARIE HAMILTON*.

The chief mate of the *Marie Hamilton* was a hearty, coarse, pushing man, and a good sailor. He soon put John in the way of getting things in order, and managed, as there were not many passengers, to let him have a cabin to himself, and also extended his protection to Spot, for which John was very grateful.

How new were these experiences! how many things were to be learnt! Everything he saw filled him with surprise; and next morning John, who had never lived on the sea-coast, was aghast as he watched the active sailors swarm up aloft and shake out the white sails. There was a stiff breeze blowing, and poor John experienced all the customary sensations.

He lay aft, dreadfully sick, and could not be prevailed upon to move. The sailors, who every now and then came aft in a party to haul on the braces as the ship was put about, walked over him, but he did not mind it. One of them drew him a little on one side, but it was like moving a corpse—in fact,

John would not have minded being a corpse just at that moment. The steward had been up several times with offers of food, which his soul abhorred, and now came up with a blanket, with which he covered the wretched youth. The warmth did him good, and towards midnight he managed to crawl down and get into his bunk. In a few days, however, these feelings were a thing of the past, and the warm, sunny skies began to exercise their genial influence on our young traveller. How delicious to move about in the month of January with summer clothing; to bask in the warm rays of the sun, watching the snowy-winged sea-birds poisoning themselves on the yards! Now they dashed like a streak of lightning round the quarter of the vessel, circling gracefully up into the air again; and now they dropped on the water, falling gradually behind, until one could scarcely note the tiny white speck on the boundless blue of the rising wave. How charming to watch the minute "Portugese men-o'-war," each little

bark cruising on its own account, and commissioned in the Admiralty Court of Nature, in the name of Nature's God! How delightful at night to lean on the quarter-rail and look over into the wild, whirling eddies of dark, deep water, sparkling with phosphorescent fire; or note the ship's bow as it ploughed its way through the solemn main, furrowing its track in living fire! How glorious to sit and watch the golden sunset, the sky at first fretted with a network of gorgeously tinted cumuli, then dissolving into less bright but more delicate and not less beautiful shades of colour, till at last the great light sinks—a living, burning, glowing sphere—behind the vast waste of waters, to give place to the "gentle Lady Moon," which, rising "full-orbed in silvery majesty," casts her fairy-like enchanted light in a bright chain athwart the darkened rippling sea, until, rising on high, she watches with "her silent eye" the universe below, causing the masts and cordage to stand out in alternate light and shadow! What a glamour steals over the heart of man at such a time! what a desire for solitude, for communion with one's own heart—the hour of faith, of prayer, of love! Who of those that have gone down to the sea in great ships have not felt the sad, inexplicable yearning of the heart for the higher, purer life, when watching the star-sown heavens, or contrasting the insignificance of themselves and their bark and the huge immensity of space around them.

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." But "the heavens declare His handiwork."

John West felt all this. He thought he could never tire of the voyage; but after a time, the continual sameness and monotony became irksome.

There were a few other passengers, but none with whom he cared to become intimate. One was a young man of the name of Boyle, on his way out, like himself, to learn sheep-farming in Australia. Boyle had rather exalted notions of his destiny, for he frequently informed any who would listen to him that he was going to manage a large station belonging to his uncle. The young man had a natural taste for low company, and his greatest pleasure lay in playing cards with the sailors in the fore-castle.

There was also a travelling bag-man for some London firm on board—a Jew named Cohen.

It so happened that Boyle had in some manner made himself obnoxious to the "son of Moses;" and one night, when returning from the fore-castle, a bucket of bilge-water, emptied on him by an unseen hand in a lofty position, drenched him to the skin. Boyle vowed vengeance. The perpetrator of the trick was not to be discovered, but in his own mind he was convinced that to Cohen the debt was due. This little affair happened when the Marie Hamilton was about crossing the line; and the weather being very hot, the passengers were accustomed to go forward before sunrise in order to bathe, the water being played upon them through the hose of the fire-engine.

A few mornings after Boyle's little adventure, the passengers went as usual for their early refresher; and West, who was first ready, was about to advance, when a meaning look and wink from the man who held the hose made him draw back. He noticed that this morning the brass nozzle was screwed on to the canvas-pipe, and that two men were working the pump instead of one, as was customary. Cohen now stepped for-

ward—he was a big, stout, fat man—completely undressed. The two sailors at the engine set to work with all their might, the third directed the nozzle, and in an instant the unfortunate bagman was covered from head to foot with tar. In vain did he turn his back, he only received on it the remainder of the dose which had been ingeniously concealed in the nozzle. Consternation was depicted on the faces of some, while others greeted the unhappy victim with shouts of laughter. No one enjoyed the affair more than his enemy Boyle.

But he laughed too loud. Cohen's eye settled on him. Suspicion flashed across his mind like lightning, and rushing at the unsuspecting and wholly naked youth, he seized him in his arms, and rubbed himself all over him, causing the bystanders to shriek with hysterical laughter. The infuriated young man struck out right and left, a successful blow lighting on and "bumping up" the eye of his antagonist, who retaliated with great spirit, until the combatants resembled a pair of North American Indians. Just then the chief officer came up. His appearance was a signal for the sailors, who were looking on with pretended amazement depicted on their faces, to disperse.

A few words in his rough, imperious tone of voice sufficed to part the coloured gentlemen, who now became alive to the intense absurdity of their position. Boyle made his way in safety to the cook's galley, where, with the assistance of some of the men, he got slushed down and cleansed.

Cohen, however, was not so fortunate. His cabin was one of the stern state-rooms, and to reach it he had to pass through the whole length of the saloon.

It was obviously impossible to put on clothes, and nothing re-

mained for it but to clear the coast and to make a desperate rush. So turning to John, he begged him to act the part of advanced-guard and reconnoitre ahead. John returned with the welcome news that no one was to be seen, whereupon Cohen made a frantic effort; but, alas! "the best laid schemes of mice and men," as Burns says, often go wrong. He had barely got half-way down the companion when he was met by a middle-aged married lady from Ireland, of the name of Sullivan—who was returning with her husband to the colonies—and a Miss MacFagg, a sentimental, long-bodied Scotch maiden of forty, with a partly lackadaisical, partly sanctimonious, expression of visage, and a long thin head, sparsely covered with a crop of wiry sandy hair, who was on her way out to a relative in Sydney.

They had emerged from their cabins to enjoy the morning air just as West left the saloon, and in consequence a meeting on the companion was the result. Owing to the impetus, caused by the rate at which he was travelling, Cohen hurriedly swept past Mrs Sullivan, liberally besmearing her hands—which she had stretched out in front of her to protect herself—with the sticky pigment which covered his own skin, and almost rushed into the arms of Miss MacFagg, who was a step or two lower down, and who saluted him with a piercing shriek. In vain he turned to fly; his self-possession—bewildered as he was by the shouts of Mrs Sullivan, who kept bawling at the top of her voice, "Murder! savages! the bloody, dhirty villyian, he's ruined my dhresh intirely!" and hewing at him with her sun-shade, and the shrieks of Miss MacFagg, who on her knees entreated him to spare her innocence and her scalp—

completely deserted him. In vain, covering his face with his hands, he endeavoured to pass on either side of his strong-minded Irish adversary. She set to him with the precision of a dancing-mistress, until a heavy and well-directed blow from the sun-shade sent him rolling down the cuddy-stairs into the saloon, bringing the terrified Miss MacFagg along with him.

The whole scene had not occupied a minute, and John was the only bystander who had witnessed it. The other passengers, stewards, &c., who had hurried to the spot on hearing the noise, arriving only in time to see the half-madened Jew disappear in his cabin, now surrounded West in order to get an explanation, and the saloon resounded with uproarious merriment as Cohen's awkward situation became known. Miss MacFagg retired to her cabin, from which she did not emerge until the afternoon of next day; but the dauntless Mrs Sullivan appeared at breakfast, at which meal she narrated the adventure to the much-amused skipper, who absolutely shrieked as she finished by saying, "The dhirty blackgyard. I dhrew out and I hit him across the shouldthers and knocked him dhown." This and one or two other little occurrences served to break the tediousness of the trip, which was beginning to tell upon all, especially the more experienced travellers; and the near approach to Australian shores was hailed with delight, and by none more than John. Why was he glad? He had no friends awaiting him. He did not know, he never even asked himself the question; but the feeling of delight was almost ecstatic as the glittering coast shone under their lee, and universal enthusiasm existed as the Marie Hamilton ran close in, affording her passengers and crew

a view of the beautiful panorama of wooded hills and blue mountain-peaks, and grassy slopes running down to the open sandy beaches or rock-bound shores of the sea. "That's 'Kiama,'" said the skipper to John. John did not know what "Kiama" was—he had never heard the name before. He stood leaning on the rail, watching the shore, and lost in thought. In imagination he peopled those green hills with a savage, bloodthirsty race, whose ancestors had gone on the war-path, and followed the chase over those silent valleys and rugged mountains for hundreds, ay, perhaps thousands, of years. He thought how, when all Christendom was convulsed with strife and war, the inhabitants of these dark, rolling forests had lived on calmly, pursuing their own primitive mode of life. What they were at the time of the advent of our Saviour, that they were still. It had wrought no change for them. Their life was what it had been, it might be, in Moses' time, or still further back in the obscurer ages of the world's history. It seemed almost like paying a visit to one of the planets, approaching a country whose people were utterly ignorant of the commonest European information.

As the day wore on and the glorious sunshine came to an end, bets were freely offered and taken as to the hour of arrival at Sydney Heads.

The moon was at the full, and the Marie Hamilton sailed merrily onward,—just as if the "Sydney girls" had hold of the tow-rope, as the boatswain cheerily remarked. About ten o'clock in the evening they passed Botany Bay, and soon the perpendicular cliffs which line the shore between it and the entrance to the Cove towered above them in the clear moonlight—the abrupt, rugged harshness of the

rocky wall seeming more awful as each lofty headland was thrown forward into bold relief by the dark-shadowed clefts and chasms behind. They passed the dreadful Gap, the scene of a shipwreck, the harrowing details of which will never be forgotten by the inhabitants of Sydney; and shortly afterwards the pilot came on board, and the Marie Hamilton entered the Heads and cast anchor for the night.

But whose pen can describe the fairy-like beauty of the scene next morning, when the steam-tug towed their floating home up the glorious harbour to Sydney, the Queen of the Southern Seas?

The clearness of the atmosphere, and the deep blue of the sky, in which blazed a semi-tropical sun; the smooth water; the charming little coves and sheltered bays; the wooded shores; the splendid villas crowning the rising slopes and embosomed in luxuriant verdure; the trim little yachts; and the noble aspect of the city from the harbour, which was crowded with steamers and ships, a perfect forest of masts rising close to the shore,—charmed our hero beyond measure.

Garden Island and Pinchgut are passed, and the Towers of Government House rise imposingly over the waters of Farm Cove, where two or three men-of-war lie serenely at anchor, their union-jacks hanging lazily from the sterns of the vessels; while the beautiful Botanic Gardens lend a tropical character to the whole, which absolutely transports the beholder. No wonder the Sydney people are proud of their City by the Sea, for there are few spots more lovely.

John soon got his things on shore; and having fixed on lodgings, he went for a stroll. He found out Mr Cosgrove's agents, Messrs Bond

and Foreclose, who honoured his draft, treating him, however, with a business-like off-handedness which rather took him aback; for he had expected, from the familiar way in which Mr Cosgrove spoke of them, that a friend of his would be a person of some consideration with them. A walk about town filled him with surprise. The puggaree-encircled hats and helmets were to him a novel sight. The Chinese stores in the lower part of George Street, and the diggers (in coloured flannel shirts and long boots), some of whom he saw loitering about the booking-office of a coaching firm, were also new and strange; and he listened in puzzled wonder to the quick sharp cries of the omnibus cads as they rapidly uttered a string of foreign-sounding native names.

The long wooden drinking-troughs for horses outside the doors of many of the suburban inns, gave an air of rustic simplicity to the long one-storeyed buildings, which the presence in town of innumerable horsemen from the neighbouring country supported.

At the same time, he was much impressed with the architectural beauty of some of the newer streets and public edifices, and with the evidences of wealth and prosperity which greeted him everywhere.

He found his way to the office of the Australian Steam Navigation Company, and having taken his passage for Brisbane, Moreton Bay, he returned to his lodgings. On the evening of the next day he went on board the s.s. Telegraph, and soon afterwards the countless lights of Sydney twinkled in the gloom behind them and were lost to view.

Here he met a different class of people to any he had hitherto come in contact with, and he did not at first exactly know what to make

of them. There were a number of stout, bearded, and very much bronzed men, who looked like gentlemen : and yet there was an off-handedness and air of recklessness about some of them which he had never perceived in those with whom he had associated at home ; and he noticed that the hands of nearly all, although in some instances decorated with rings, were rough and coarse. They appeared to have much to say ; and from the familiarity with which they treated one another, John at first inclined to think that they must be members of what he had heard termed the swell-mob. Occasionally a few words of their conversation came to his ears ; and the expressions "new country," "account sales," "horses and cattle," "pound a-head all round," "up at my place," &c., reminded him of Mr Cosgrove's conversation, and he made up his mind that these must be Queensland squatters returning after a trip to Sydney. When John in the course of time came to know this class better, he found that among them were to be met numbers of men of first-rate education, gentlemanly manners, and high principles, as well also as those of a rougher stamp ; but nearly all were shrewd, practical men, devoted to their independent bush-life, and bearing about with them a frankness which seemed born of the rough-and-ready stirring life they led. There were also a few younger men of the same stamp, some of them looking rather unwell, as if recovering from the effects of Sydney dissipation. John's fellow-passenger Boyle was also among the number. He had managed to introduce himself, or had been introduced, to a circle of ladies, and was evidently affording them amusement, as could be seen by the endeavours which some of the younger

ones made to draw him out, and the merriment which followed each sally. There were also some who looked like city business-men, and one or two travelling bagmen. The passengers seemed to agree very well, and there did not appear to be any of the stiffness which characterises English travelling at home. The captain, a polite, highly-educated seaman, made himself agreeable to all, and was especially attentive to the ladies and children. John mentioned Mr Cosgrove's name ; and the captain, who knew everybody, was quite interested, and inquired in the most particular way after Ruth, who was, he said, a charming child, and a great friend of his. The table was well supplied, and the scent of pine-apples seemed to pervade the saloon : the whole surroundings called to John's mind descriptions he had read of steamer-travelling in the Southern States of America. Two days' rapid steaming along the coast brought them in sight of Stradbroke Island ; and shortly afterwards, passing several islands, they entered the mouth of the Brisbane river. The shores were low and uninteresting at first, and devoid of all life, except where, here and there, a group of native companions stalked solemnly or played fantastically on the mud among the mangroves ; but as the steamer tore the placid waters, and forced her onward course, the banks gradually rose, and became densely covered with vegetation of a tropical character. The river bent and twisted in many a romantic winding ; and as each corner was turned, a still more beautiful scene than the last lay before the travellers. The long reaches of deep, calm water, fringed with dense groves of plantains and bananas or tall graceful bamboos, delighted John's gaze.

Here and there were passed beautiful verandaed cottages covered with creepers, situated in the midst of luxuriant gardens and orange-groves, from which little jetties or boat-stairs led down to the water's edge. Numerous buildings announced the approach to the city, as it is called, of Brisbane. The steamer was soon made fast alongside the jetty, and it being a moist wet day, there were few people to witness its arrival.

John got his things ashore, and set off to find accommodation. Both the principal hotels were full, and he turned away in search of a third, where he was fortunate enough to secure a small room.

It rained all day, and when towards evening it ceased for a time, and our "new chum" went out to explore, he was astonished to find that the city was almost entirely built of wood, and that it was scarcely bigger than many villages at home. Since then a great change for the better has taken place in the capital of Queensland, both in size and architecture. He returned

to an early supper and bed, but, alas! not to sleep. He suffered the tortures of the Inquisition from a numerous and active body of mosquitoes, who, having discovered the treat awaiting them in the person of a new arrival, obstinately defied all his efforts to dislodge them from the positions they had taken up within the curtains, and prosecuted their investigations with the most pertinacious perseverance, discovering the tenderest portions of his body with a scientific skill which said much for their vast experience and interest in the matter on hand.

Towards morning he fell into a feverish sleep, on awaking from which he resolved that from Brisbane he should depart that very day: so having finished breakfast, he had his things put on board the river-steamer Ipswich, bound for Ipswich, an inland town about thirty miles distant from Brisbane, and the place where he expected to meet the horses which were to convey him to Mr Cosgrove's station, Cambaranga.

III.—IPSWICH IN THE OLD DAYS—A "JACKAROO" ON HORSEBACK.

The river-steamer Ipswich was not long in conveying our "new chum," like hundreds of others previously, and thousands subsequently, to his place of destination. The river-scenery appeared even more beautiful than on the preceding day, for on three parts of the days of the year in Queensland the sun shines brilliantly.

He found, on inquiry, that Mr Cosgrove's agent knew nothing about him or horses; so, taking up his quarters at one of the hotels, he despatched a letter to Mr Cosgrove's manager, acquainting him

with his arrival, and then proceeded to survey the town.

This he accomplished in a very short time; but, nevertheless, much was occurring around of a novel and interesting character.

Numbers of bullock-waggons, each drawn by ten or twelve great, bony-looking, large-horned oxen, lined the streets, their drivers sunburnt, healthy-looking men, in home-made flannel shirts and moleskin trousers, and cabbage-tree hats, mostly engaged with others similarly attired in either unloading bales of wool or loading supplies at the various stores, the occupation being inter-

rupted every now and then by what John soon learned was the great national pastime of Queensland—viz., having a drink all round.

Laden teams, groaning and creaking, slowly made their way into or out of the busy little town, among clouds of dust, with much cracking of whips and shouting of bullocks' names by the drivers, who walked beside their teams, carrying over their shoulders a long-handled whip with thong of raw-salted hide, called in the colony greenhide.

In many instances, when two or three teams travelled together, one or more were driven by black boys—that is to say, aboriginal natives—the term being invariably employed by colonists towards the blacks in their service, no matter what age they may be. These were attired similarly to their white companions, in shirt and trousers—but the shirts were, as a rule, of a more gaudy pattern; and a bright-coloured handkerchief as often as not encircled their waists or was bound round their heads.

They seemed very proficient in the vocabulary necessary to the professed bullock-driver, and thorough masters of the formidable cowhide, and, on the whole, were happy, merry fellows, with dark, shiny complexions, bright eyes, and strong, white teeth. As a rule, they had beautiful curly hair, and some of the more civilised among them seemed to bestow great care upon their personal appearance. Horses of all kinds, and ridden by men, women, and boys, passed continually up and down the streets, or stood tied up at the doors of stores and private dwellings. Every one seemed to ride who had any business to do. Each house had its stockyard, or enclosure of posts and rails, for the purpose of holding

horses and cattle when driven in from the surrounding bush, where they pastured. Men kept arriving from the country or departing thither chiefly on horseback. To a practised eye it was an easy matter to determine the calling or profession of each from his appearance. The old shepherd generally came slowly along, mounted on some long-tailed, quiet mare, or good-looking but aged and broken-down hack, sitting on a stained, patched, old saddle—a huge bundle of clothes, wrapped in a well-worn blue blanket, strapped in front of him; a dog-chain or two fastened on one side of his saddle, and a quart-pot and pint rattling together on the other. An old, worn, blue-serve shirt on his back, a pair of dirty white moleskin trousers covering his nether man, and a battered old felt hat on his head, completed his attire; while his pouch contained his knife, matches, and tobacco, together with his last agreement of service, a few old receipts for horses bought, and, in all probability, a considerable cheque—a sensible collie-dog or two generally bringing up the rear.

The splitter and fencer or shearer presented a much smarter appearance. Strong, muscular, bearded, in his prime, clad neatly and comfortably, sometimes with a spare horse carrying his baggage, he came into town hearty and jolly, to leave it, alas! too often, with an emptier pocket, and a bloodshot eye and shaking hand.

The neat, smart-looking, well-mounted stockman passed quickly along, sitting his horse with an easy grace, the result of many a long overland journey or sharp mountain gallop. Now and again a squatter, mounted on a well-bred, active hack, moved by, a spare horse or two being driven by his

attendant black boy. The public-houses presented a very busy sight; and judging by the bars, it seemed that when men were not eating, sleeping, or working, they were drinking grog and boasting (or blowing, in colonial parlance) of some feat which they had performed, or of the particular merits of some horse, bullock, dog, or man. As a rule, the conversation was very horsey or bullocky. The bar parlours seemed to be quite as full as the tap-rooms; and squatters, merchants, and professional men transacted their business, or amused themselves, very much in the same manner as their inferiors.

No bargain could be completed without a "wet" over it, and no friendship formed or enmity forgotten without recourse to the bottle. Many of the shepherds and other bushmen, indeed, considered it the correct thing to put their year's wages into the hands of the publican whose house they stayed at, with the request to inform them when the money was spent—until which time they themselves drank, and treated everybody else who would drink with them. Indeed they not unfrequently annoyed those whom they might chance to fall in with by insisting on standing treat—a refusal being very often answered by a show of anger and an indignant "Oh, you're too proud to drink with a poor man!" Quarrelling, singing, riding furiously, a night spent in the lock-up, a recovery of misery, perhaps a touch of *delirium tremens*,—in this way many of these men spent their short holiday in town, and the money they had laboured so hard for. John soon got tired of these scenes, and took his way back to his inn. On the road he passed numerous parties of aboriginals—the men in tattered shirts and trousers, most-

ly without hats, their heads covered with a huge mass of tangled ringlets,—for the black fellow who lives in the bush bestows but small attention on his "cobra," as the head is usually called in the pigeon-English which they employ. The women sometimes wore merely a shirt; and a favourite article of apparel was the skirt of a white woman's dress, the band fastened over one shoulder and under the other arm, the opposite arm passing through the slit. Sometimes they used cloaks made of opossum-skin, and many carried children on their backs.

John afterwards learnt that it was compulsory for them to appear clothed to a certain extent in town, their own natural inclination being the other way. They seemed to loiter about without any particular object.

Occasionally one of the men might be seen chopping wood or fetching water, and some of the *gins*, as the women are called, employed in assisting at housework. Many begged, on the smallest opportunity, for *toombacco* (tobacco) or "white money;" others were seated or stretched lazily along the shady side of some building, incessantly singing a monotonous ditty, or enjoying a snooze. On the whole, they seemed a merry, happy, careless, tolerably well-fed, dirty, greasy, abject-looking set of black people, with a peculiar smoky, overpowering smell about them.

These were part of the Ipswich tribe, and knocked out a precarious living by hunting in the bush and begging in the town.

The enforced stay wearied our friend exceedingly; he found himself the only aimless person in the place. All day long there were arrivals and departures on horse-back. Bullock-drays came and

went; supplies were landed from the steamers, and wool was despatched.

Among others, John's shipmate Boyle made a start up-country, his departure giving rise to an episode of considerable interest. He had been staying in Brisbane for a day or two, and had there purchased a handsome, though somewhat shy, black mare to carry him to his destination. This animal he had caused to be caparisoned in front of his hotel with the paraphernalia which he had brought out with him from home, thinking that in a colony so remote all saddlery was difficult to procure. His steed looked brilliant, in all the shining glory of new furniture, a glistening new bit in her mouth, and a martingale half-a-dozen sizes too big round her neck; while a huge-sized valise, sufficient for a family, crossed the pommel of his saddle, and occupied almost the entire seat. A stiff, ill-made English stock-whip hung on one side, and an apparatus containing a multitudinous assortment of knives, forks, spoons, dishes, tumblers, &c., as supposed in England to be necessary for people who eat in the open air, hung on the other. Everything about the whole bespoke "new chum," and accordingly a crowd of amused bush and town people gathered round to see the mount made and the start effected.

Presently the new arrival issued from the veranda, dressed, according to his own ideas, as much like a bushman as possible, in a thick coat and waistcoat, heavy enough for an English winter, and a pair of thick, baggy cord-breeches, with long, heavy-soled Napoleon boots, garnished with formidable long-necked spurs. A bran-new cabbage-tree hat protected his head; his waist was confined by a broad

leathern belt, supporting on one side a revolver, and on the other a large butcher's knife.

It was a matter of no little difficulty for him to mount his steed, partly from his cumbersome attire and the huge "swag" which lay across the seat, as well as from the unpleasant way in which the newly-panelled saddle kept slipping over the fat round back of his mare whenever his weight bore on the stirrup. In time, by dint of one man holding to the opposite stirrup, another keeping back the swag, a third holding the bridle, and a fourth pushing him behind, Mr Boyle gained a romantic and picturesque perch, much to his own satisfaction, amidst shouts of "Stick to her, squatter!" from the deeply-interested spectators, whose amusement was, however, soon to be changed into consternation; for when they had followed the cavalier a short distance to an open space, it entered into his head to see how his mare stood fire in case he might be placed in some of the perils which he fancied beset his journey. Accordingly, he drew his trusty and much-valued "double action" out of its bright new pouch. It had been loaded with much attention that morning, and aiming at a stump, he fired. He had no time to witness the effect of his shot. With a bound his charger flew round, and getting amongst the small crowd of onlookers, she put down her head, and executed in a circle a series of remarkably active buck-jumps. Her rider could not fall off. He sat there, trussed by the swag in front of him, desperation in his face, his long spurs jammed well into the sides of the mare, his hand mechanically holding the pistol, and with each succeeding jump involuntarily pulling the trigger, causing the bullets to fly in every direction. There

was no more laughter from the audience. With an impulse they threw themselves on the ground, preferring to chance being trampled on by the horse to being subjected to the erratic fire of the equestrian acrobat. On the cham-

bers being all discharged, the mare ceased bucking, and no one was more astonished than the rider to find himself still in his saddle. And he departed, much to the relief of those who had thus stood, or lain down to, powder for the first time.

IV.—A START UP-COUNTRY.

An evening or two after Boyle's departure John was sitting in the veranda, when a nondescript-looking vehicle, drawn by two horses tandem-fashion, and containing a very stout woman and a stockman-looking man, drove up. John had the pleasure of meeting the stout woman at dinner, and she turned out to be the proprietress of a hotel in the neighbourhood of Mr Cosgrove's station. When she heard John was going there, but detained from want of horses, she kindly informed him that he might ride one of her two back, as she intended remaining some time in town, and was about sending back horses and man.

Our hero gladly accepted the offer; and next morning, after many preparations, in close imitation of his friend Boyle, he made ready to start. His guide was the ostler of the hotel, who, being from home, was consequently on the spree. He called on John to make haste, sprang on his own horse, and in a few minutes both were galloping out of the town. The ostler proceeded in the most correct bush style. Every now and then uttering a wild cry and dashing his spurs into his nag's sides, he would fly along at his topmost speed, only to pull up again at the nearest public-house, to the veranda of which his horse's bridle was hung until he had imbibed a nobbler or two. John's horse seemed rather aston-

ished not to find his rider executing similar war-cries, but he nevertheless tore after his companion with a desperate energy, which showed the interest he took in the proceeding, and pulled up at the doors of the bush inns with a suddenness which, but for the swag in front of him, would have sent poor John, who was rather aghast at this desperate sort of travelling, sprawling.

They reached their destination towards evening—a pretty, quiet little inn, the stout motherly landlady of which conducted our friend to a neat little parlour, and gave him a quiet supper, after which he betook himself to bed, feeling, after his twenty-five-mile ride, as if every bone in his body was broken.

Next day the travellers proceeded in a much more orderly manner; and about mid-day a man was descried coming towards them, leading a horse. This proved to be one of Mr Cosgrove's men, with horses for the young traveller.

John enjoyed this journey through wild woods beyond measure; and when, after passing through many a dark ravine, and climbing the green slopes of the great ranges, they gazed on the distant shining peaks standing out against the blue sky, while all around rose silently tall, straight-stemmed trees, whose leaves whispered away above them at an immense height, the first feeling of that love of the wild bush, its silent calm, and its elo-

quent beauty, began to dawn on him. His spirit welled up within him, and he felt, and rejoiced in, his strength—he revelled in the enjoyment of life. An unknown future lay before him, but he had no care as to what that future was; he lived in the present, and all was new and fascinating.

The startled kangaroo flying through the forest glade—the harsh-voiced, big-headed, laughing jackass—the bright-hued paroquet—the screeching cockatoo—and a hundred other forms of life—amazed and delighted him.

How picturesque the encampment of bullock-drays looked on the roadside, when, the day's work being completed, the bows and yokes were taken off the necks of the great oxen, and varied-toned sonorous bells fastened round them instead, and the jangling crowd was driven by a man on horseback up the creek to some well-known spot, where the pasturage was particularly good, the deep knell of the stock-whip reverberating through the forest every now and then! How pleasant to see the preparations for the evening meal, the huge fire of logs, the galvanised-tin bucket full of tea, the smoking dish of beef and potatoes, which, together with many other comforts and luxuries, proved that the Australian bullock-drivers have a partiality for good living, and indulge it! At last they arrived at the end of their day's journey, an inn similar to the one they spent the previous night at; and John's romantic imagination received a considerable check, owing to the exquisite pain which an alarming abrasion of his cuticle caused him. Indeed he almost feared that the end of his journey would find him minus the greater portion of his outer man.

He slept that night the sleep of

the wearied "new chum," and with his companions was on the road next morning early enough to come upon a camp of fat cattle travelling down to market.

The haze of the night had scarce lifted from the dank grass of the wide rolling downs. The smoke of the camp-fire rose lazily through the mist-laden atmosphere, at some distance from the road.

A mounted horseman, enveloped in a large blanket from head to foot, emerged from the fog, and, as if out of the earth, there rose up slowly and deliberately bullock after bullock, to the number of forty or fifty, and took their way towards town, the horseman moving quietly after them in a zigzag manner.

The mist clearing off soon after, disclosed a second horseman at the fire, apparently engaged in packing the food and cooking-utensils upon a spare horse, his own grazing beside him, the bridle between its legs.

The scene which now met their eyes was one of the greatest beauty; and John wondered at the unsympathetic manner with which his fellow-travellers listened to his raptured expressions of delight, as he viewed the vast extent of undulating, richly-grassed prairie, lovely valleys with timber-crowned ridges varying the beauty of the whole, while sharp wooded promontories here and there ran far out into the wide sea of plain, ranges of blue mountains forming the frame of this enchanting picture.

The lowing of the distant herd fell soothingly upon the morning air as, grazing slowly, the sated cattle made their way from the open country to the shady camps under the trees, beside the cool waters of the creek which flowed through this pleasant land.

As they proceeded they passed

camp after camp of bullock-drays, the drivers and assistants all busy in yoking up for the day. This cannot be effected without much running about, shouting, swearing, and use of the whip, which weapon the practised bullock-driver wields with the most severe effect, each lash leaving a long cut on the hide of the devoted beast, who cringes under it. As bullock-drivers are continually breaking-in young cattle, there is a constant freshness in this work, which is by no means devoid of danger, many of the young bullocks—and indeed some of the older ones—being of uncertain temper, and prone, when opportunity offers, to charge and gore any unhappy wight unable to get out of their way.

As the day wore on, they overtook bullock-drays lurching along heavily

in the ruts of the road, the little keg of water at the tail-board swinging as if it would wrench out the staple it hung by, and the driver appealing occasionally to some bullock or other by name, following up his admonition by a sweeping cut of his "gully-raker," and a report like a musket-shot. The intelligence displayed by the leaders and polers was very great; and they obeyed the word of the driver, coming to him, or moving from him, with the utmost docility. The pace they travelled at barely exceeded two miles an hour; and the mite of a small boy who in some instances drove the spare bullocks behind, found relief from *ennui* in addressing imperious words of command to them, couched in the strongest language, with as big a voice as his small lungs could produce.

V.—ROADSIDE SCENES—NIGHT AT A STATION—ARRIVAL AT CAMBARANGA.

The travellers proceeded along the road, their horses walking or jogging, which are the customary paces when journeying.

They encountered and overtook many teams, their drivers exchanging a morning salutation and a few words of greeting with John's two friends, who seemed to know, or know of, everybody they met. Occasionally a horseman or two, or a pedestrian carrying his worldly goods rolled up in his blanket and strapped on his back, a billy (that is, a round tin pitcher with a lid) in his hand, and with a dog or two at his heels, met and passed them, exchanging the usual "good morning."

These men all seemed to go with-out coats or waistcoats, or braces, a waist-belt confining the trousers at the girdle. Indeed, so much did this seem the fashion, that partly

induced by it, and partly by the heat, John soon followed suit, and rolled his upper clothing in the swag in front of him.

Traces of favourite camping-places met their eyes at every water-course they came to. Each lagoon or water-hole had innumerable round spots of grey ashes, with a few black embers lying among them, all around it. Many of the surrounding trees were cut down for fuel; and great numbers of empty jam-pots, salmon, lobster, and sardine tins, broken brandy-bottles, perhaps an old boot or two, and part of a rotten old saddle, lay scattered about. Soon they passed a head-station, as the homestead and main buildings of a station are invariably called. It belonged to a very rich squatter, whose name was a power in the country, and was beautifully situated. The houses were comfort-

ably built and of handsome design. A large garden adjoined them; creepers covered the verandas and outbuildings, of which there were many; and several paddocks of great extent, encircled by substantial posts and rail fences, surrounded the whole. They shortly afterwards crossed a small running creek; and it being almost mid-day, a halt was called for the purpose of giving the horses a spell and having a "pot of tea."

Accordingly, the horses were unsaddled. They were then taken down to the water and had their backs washed, to prevent the sweat hardening under the saddle and causing sores; after which each had a pair of hobbles fastened round his fore-fetlocks, a proceeding which he quite seemed to expect; and they hobbled off in a series of short jerks, with their noses to the ground, seeking for the softest spot in the vicinity. This was no sooner discovered than they dropped on their knees, and thence on their sides, testifying their satisfaction by rolling over and over repeatedly. Then springing to their feet and shaking themselves free from dust and dirt, they set to work to crop the grass. John was so much interested in observing this that he forgot his own duties. However, his friend the ostler unstrapped the quarts and filled them with water, the other man having made a glorious fire in a few minutes. The quart-pots were now put on to boil, swags were opened and food produced. John, unused to the ways of the bush, and feeling, after the good breakfast, as if he never would want food again, had neglected to take anything with him for lunch, and now looked with considerable dismay at his own bulky but at present useless swag.

"Ah," said the ostler, "I know'd

as how you new chums never thinks o' nothing, so I brought enuff for both of us."

"Look out there!" he continued; "quart-pot corroborree," springing up and removing with one hand from the fire one of the quart-pots, which was boiling madly, while with the other he dropped in about as much tea as he could hold between his fingers and thumb. Then stirring it with a straw, he set it aside to draw. The other quart-pot was served in a similar way; but John's, although in a hotter spot, showed no signs of boiling. In vain he applied more fuel, the fire seemed to have no effect.

"It's no use," said his friends; "them new quarts takes a month o' Sundays to bile. Ye see, ours has been used many a day, and they're battered and black, and takes kindly to it; but them new ones don't like it, somehow."

And so it was, for they had almost finished their meal before the new quart "corroborreed," as the stockman phrased it. It came in handy, however, with the after-dinner pipe which both the men indulged in.

Horses were now caught and saddled, swags were strapped on, and they travelled onwards in the same manner as in the morning. They had not gone very far when the little bull-terrier pup which John had brought with him from home, and which was growing rapidly into a very handsome young dog, made a rush at something in the grass, and shook it violently.

"What is it?" shouted John, greatly excited.

"Snake," returned both the men in a breath.

"Oh, my dog, he will be bitten!" cried poor John; and throwing himself off his horse he seized a bul-

lock's shin-bone which happened to be lying handy. He struck the snake (a long, lithe, flat-headed black one) such a blow on the head as to deprive it of power. Bully rushed in again before John could prevent him, and crushed its head between his jaws.

"Do you think he's hurt," asked John, anxiously.

"Well, if he aint, it won't be long before he will be," said the ostler; "but, Lord, you never knows when a beast gets bitten. Just the other day I was a-ridin' along, and I notices a snake—the same kind as that un—under my horse's feet, and I thought I felt her give a bit of a kick with her off hind-foot, but I wasn't sure like. Howsom-ever, she went along picking up a mouthful of grass now an' ag'in quite lively like, when all of a sudden she stopped and trembled, then she lay down, and she died in half an hour in mortal pain."

"Ay, sometimes they dies in five minutes," said the other. "I think it all depends on whether their blood is hot or not. If so be as they are warm, the pison tells very quick; and I think *that* 'ere dog is agoin' to croak."

John's distress was very great at seeing his faithful little companion move about uneasily, lie down, get up, whine, lick his hand, then look up in his face as if mutely asking help. Once or twice he returned to the dead snake and shook it, and John hoped that they were mistaken in the symptoms. But it was not so: poor Bully shivered, drew up his limbs, became rigid, recovered, whined again, kept licking his master's hand, and at last died in great agony.

It was with a sore heart that John mounted his horse to continue his journey. The dog had proved a loving companion, and

was growing very dear to him; besides which, he was very valuable on account of his pure breed, and was generally admired.

That evening they reached the hotel to which the ostler was bound; and after spending the night there, they bade him farewell next morning, the man refusing to take the gratuity which John offered him.

A similar day's travelling through forest-country brought them at night to a station called Cooranna. They had struck off from the main highway early in the morning, and had passed over many miles without meeting a single traveller. Part of the distance lay over poor country, covered with tit-tree, box, and iron-bark saplings, with here and there heavy timber growing on sour-looking ridges. *Lignum-vitæ* and bastard-myall bushes were very common; while huge, dense scrubs, composed chiefly of bugalow-trees and undergrowth, lined the road in many places. In the neighbourhood of these scrubs the game was especially plentiful; and kangaroos, paddy-melons, wallabies, and kangaroo-rats crossed the road continually. Sometimes an iguana, disturbed from his siesta, would hurry quickly to a tree at some distance off, which he would ascend carefully on the opposite side to that on which his enemy appeared. Just before reaching the station the country improved.

In accordance with his mentor's advice, John rode up to the main building of the station, hung his horse's bridle to the fence, and walked to the house.

A lady came out to meet him; and John, mentioning his name and destination, requested hospitality for the night. He was most kindly received. The lady, who was

the wife of the owner of the station, calling to a young black boy to bring water for the horse's back, showed John the entrance to the paddock, into which he turned his horse. She then brought him inside, and asking if the man who accompanied him had gone down to the travellers' hut (a building especially destined for the accommodation of the labouring classes), she ushered him into a neat little bedroom. Soon afterwards the clatter of horses' hoofs announced the arrival of her husband—a big, bronzed man, with a fair beard and a bright laughing eye. He welcomed John in the most hearty manner; and before many minutes had elapsed, the young emigrant found himself talking, laughing, and relating adventures to his new friends as if he had known them all his life.

Dinner over, the rest of the evening was spent on the veranda in pleasant conversation. His entertainers earnestly pressed their guest to rest the next day; but John, who was anxious to get to the end of his journey, declined. "Well," said the kindly squatter, "'Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest' is the rule of the bush, you know. Breakfast will be on the table at six to-morrow morning, and the horses in the yard ready for you. Good-night."

Next morning, after breakfast, and bidding farewell to the kind owners of Cooranilla, the horsemen proceeded to complete their last day's travel. The roads were almost as deserted as on the preceding day. They sometimes, though rarely, passed a footman coming or going, or a tilted cart drawn by a couple of horses, and occupied by the driver's wife, children, and household goods.

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Towards the middle of the day they came upon cheerful-looking iron-bark ridges; while on the right, green apple-tree flats bordered on a well-watered creek, along whose banks numbers of sleek, quiet, well-bred-looking cattle grazed. Occasionally they passed through a "mob" standing on the roadside, and John was greatly amused at seeing some of the young calves and steers advancing boldly to them with many airs of assumed anger, tearing up the ground with their fore-feet, and shaking their heads—only to scamper away, kicking their heels in the air, on a movement being made towards them. This, his companion informed him, was a part of Mr Fitzgerald's run—Un-gah run; and pointed out, at the same time, that the cattle had all, even to the smallest, the letters FGD burnt into the skin of the near-side rump. They were also all marked with a peculiar slit in the off ear,—it being customary, and indeed compulsory, as regarded protection of property, for owners to brand and mark all their stock in a similar manner.

After some miles they came to barer-looking country. The grass did not seem so green, and was fed down much shorter, and innumerable little paths ran leading in the same directions. Towards evening they overtook a flock of sheep, greatly scattered, and slowly feeding towards a small hut which, with two large yards, occupied a rising ground about half a mile away.

The sheep seemed to have had plenty to eat during the day, for their sides were very much distended, and they moved slowly and steadily. The shepherd had left them to find their way home themselves, and had gathered a few sticks to make up his even-

ing fire, when, hearing the horses' feet, the two black-and-tan collies which followed at his heels turned and barked, causing the sheep in their immediate neighbourhood to rush suddenly and look round, and the shepherd to set down his load and wait for them.

"Holloa, Tom!" he shouted to John's guide; "got back again? How are things looking down in Limestone?"*

Tom gave a short description of what was going on, and the people he saw there, and the appearance of the country generally—all of which was listened to with much interest by the shepherd. They now pushed on at a faster pace, and the horses themselves seemed anxious to get over the ground. It was dark when they arrived at Cambaranga, as Mr Cosgrove's station was called. The night hung heavily on the dark forests which shaded each side of the road, but above,

the heaven was unclouded and bright with stars. At last they saw a twinkling light in the distance. As they approach nearer, a dog, hearing the tread of hoofs, barked sharply, causing numerous others to take up the chorus. The dogs then made a rush in concert (yelping all the time) to meet the new-comers; and satisfied on hearing the well-known voice of the stockman, they joyfully bring up the rear.

John and his companion now arrive at the little paling-fence which encloses the main buildings. Two or three men come out and shake him by the hand and ask a few questions. The stockman gives a short account of his proceedings; the unsaddled horses are turned out free into the bush to find their favourite haunts, and recruit after the journey; and John is brought through a veranda, thickly covered with creepers, inside the house.

* The name Ipswich bore before it received its present appellation. It is common for the older hands to retain the use of the name to which they were first accustomed. Many of the Queensland towns have these double names. For instance, Trowoomba was called the Swamp; Drayton, the Springs; Dalby, Myallcreek; Roma, the Bungill, &c., &c.

OLD SQUIRES AND NEW.

WE fear that the general complaints of embarrassment will waken melancholy echoes in many a heart this winter; though embarrassment itself, or, as it may be more familiarly rendered, being "hard up," may mean so much or so little. It may mean the retrenching on gloves and cigars, if you are conscientious and reasonably prudent; or changing your tradesmen and practising on their confidence, if you are unscrupulous and indifferent to the morrow. Or it may imply something even more pitiful than a bare cupboard and a fireless hearth: the crouching in the streets, houseless and homeless; the huddling in the shivering crowd at the doors of the workhouse, when the icy drift is soaking through the flimsy rage, when the very blood in the veins seems to be freezing with the pipes and the cisterns in an intensity of frost that is splitting the paving-stones. You may be very hard up after a bad year on the turf—and unfavourable seasons to gentlemen who go upon the turf as amateurs come even more frequently than to the grumbling farmers—when you have to retrench by putting down a hunter or two, or even parting with your cover hack, and possibly by hunting by rail from town in the home counties, in place of planting a stud in some centre in the shires. Or a man may be hard up when he has lost his place in the City, and finds that the market for clerks is over-glutted; when the landlord is pressing for rent and the collector clamouring for taxes; when the children are crying with cold and hunger, and the baker and butcher call more punctually than ever, though they produce bills out of their baskets in place of bread

and meat. Instances of the kind might be multiplied indefinitely, and we may be very sure that all the sufferers are exceedingly sorry for themselves. Yet some of the cases, regarded dispassionately, are unquestionably harder than others, and we should be inclined to draw the line of division where there is clearly room for reforms and retrenchment. The man who is poor, in the common acceptance of the word, who has neither friend nor connection with spare cash or credit, may be said to be absolutely driven to the wall,—though, to be sure, he has always the workhouse to fall back upon. The impoverished aristocrat should be able to set himself straight by some sacrifice of luxuries which are superfluous if not ostentatious—and in nine cases out of ten, if the worst come to the worst, he has friends who will back him in one shape or another. But he might very likely tell you, with a pathos that has touched himself profoundly, that habit becomes second nature; that those apparent superfluities he is compelled to resign have really grown essential to his endurance of existence; and that the more delicate organisations have finer susceptibilities, just as "six months on the mill" comes infinitely harder on the defaulting bank director than on the case-hardened tramp. And though in the excess of his self-compassion he may push that argument too far, there is no disputing that there is a good deal in it.

The "deserving poor" who are absolutely destitute are always with us in the most prosperous times; and with shortening days and a sinking thermometer, the papers are filled with appeals to the benevolent.

But this winter, unfortunately, we are sure to hear a great deal of the "deserving rich" who are either impoverished or tending to poverty. The men who launched out in commerce or industrial enterprise were always understood to be within reach of a possible catastrophe. There were houses like "Rothschilds" and "Barings" that seem to have struck their foundations down into the rock, and whose signatures were suggestive of inexhaustible resources. But as a rule, the great body even of our "merchant princes" were presumed to run the hazards of their games of speculation. Slack times might blow out their blast furnaces; strikes might cripple the output of their coal-mines; wars and blockades might starve their cotton-mills; or, if they had embarked in the risky business of finance, a "crisis" in the City might probably prove destructive. You were sorry of course, but scarcely surprised, when Croesus, who last week had been entertaining you sumptuously in his galleries adorned by the greatest modern masters, from the buffets that were groaning under richly-chased plate, abruptly filed his declaration of insolvency, and issued circulars to his creditors through his solicitor. The failure of Croesus cost some people a million or so; and for himself, he withdrew on his wife's settlements to a more modest residence, to devise the means of retrieving his shattered fortunes. Somebody suffered, but the losses were "in the family,"—that is to say, in trading circles or the City. Any one who has had the privilege of attending one of those meetings of commercial creditors, must have remarked how charitably scandalous disclosures are received, and how lightly losses appear to be regarded. Vexatious they are, of course; but "write them off for what they may fetch, and go on again," is the maxim of

busy men. Even when the City is in panic, and disasters of the kind are common, the mischief and its consequences are more or less centralised. People may quietly reduce their expenditure—give up the brougham, dismiss the butler, or change the showy footman for a "buttons." There is a droop in the rents of suburban villas, and some "princely ornamental properties" are on the markets, while a good many small *employés* are thrown out of work: there is a sharp rise in the metropolitan poor-rates, and not a few petty tradesmen are pauperised. Yet things work round with time and patience, and the general public knows little beyond what it reads in the newspapers. The working classes in great towns and the industrial districts are familiarised with the possibility of times of distress, and have always hope to keep up their spirits. Wages must be paid again, sooner or later—for few communities, like the ribbon-weavers of Coventry, get their living by the ephemeral caprices of fashion; while industrial capitalists of all classes seem to outsiders to have a marvellous aptitude for somehow landing upon their legs,—and if some of them are occasionally smashed irretrievably, they are scarcely missed or regretted, except by their next-door neighbours. Jones—who has increased his means by industry or enterprise, and migrated southwards, in the stages of his prosperity, from Brixton to Sydenham, and from Sydenham to Reigate—should be able, when the severity of the shock is over, to reconcile himself to returning to the habits of his younger days; while his sons, having no social position, should be ready to begin life as their father did, and betake themselves to anything for an honest livelihood. And although Jones may have been a consider-

able employer of labour, and have made a generous use of his well-earned wealth, yet his collapse will be sensibly softened even to those it directly affects. His clerks and workpeople will seek situations elsewhere, — it is to be hoped, with a fair chance of obtaining them; while the items of his subscriptions to charitable objects will scarcely be missed from the metropolitan aggregate. England must always do a "big stroke of trade," so long as she keeps her invigorating climate and her colonies; and her commercial classes will be wealthy and prosperous, whatever may happen to unlucky individuals.

City houses will be in embarrassments and come to grief from time to time, but it is a new thing to look on at the spread of destitution in our country parishes. Till the other day the typical English squire was generally regarded as the most enviable of mortals. His easy income was as safe as if it came from consols, and the landed capital it was derived from was even less subject to fluctuation than funded property. Any changes in the value of land were almost invariably for the better; judicious outlay on improvements was sure to yield satisfactory interest; there was brisk competition for farms when they happened to come into the market; and if the proprietor chose to turn his estates into cash, he could safely count on a satisfactory bargain. But that was what few people cared to do, when they had tasted the sweets of ownership. There was a sense of luxury in being pleasantly independent alike of foreign complications and domestic convulsions. When the Sultan was repudiating and the Khedive talking of compromises; when "Russians" were sinking on rumours of war; and "Italians" being weighted by an *Italia irredenta*; when banks

were breaking and finance companies in collapse; when the precincts of the Stock Exchange were in a fever-fit of agitation, and the evening papers coming out in continual new editions,—the country gentlemen could wait for the journal of the day before, with the mild interest one takes in the misfortunes of his neighbour; and the morning-rooms of the Carlton and Brooks's preserved their serenity unimpaired. Then beyond the sense of security for the morrow, there was the position and the local influence. A man who was settled on his family acres was generally on excellent terms with his dependants. Many of his farmers were very old friends, and the fathers of some of them had been in their holdings for generations. He had been in the habit of shooting over their fields since he had first carried a single barrel; he supplied their "good ladies" from time to time with hares and rabbits, and always sent them a pheasant or two after a big day's shooting. He would pull up his cob in the lane for a chat, or exchange cheery greetings right and left in the hunting-field. He made a kind of patriarchal gathering of the half-yearly-rent dinner, and would sometimes lunch at the farmer's ordinary in the market-town. And in the olden time, before free-thinking in politics gained ground, and over-preserving game-salesmen had bred bad blood, the landlord and the body of his tenantry for the most part stood shoulder to shoulder at election time. Whether he were Whig or Tory, they knew him for their natural ally, and would trust him with their interests and the honour of the county. They rallied to him *en masse* in the memorable contests, which were fought out with a fabulous expenditure of money, whether he stood for the shire him-

self, or went up with a friend to the polling-booths. And the labourers too, when they used to take to service as a life-tenancy, had a kindly feeling for the occupants of the great house, who did them many a good turn in sickness or trouble. The landlord was not "hard up," or was not supposed to be so. He seldom cared to drive hard bargains with his tenants, or to look too closely to the outgoings from his kitchen. If he had sown wild oats in his youth, of course he had to reap them; but, as a rule, he settled down on his estate before he had done himself serious harm. The county knew who he was, and could make a shrewd guess at his income. He had no occasion to make a show to assert himself. Though his solid old furniture had seen wear and tear—though the Turkey carpet in his dining-room had faded out of recognition under the feet of a couple of generations of guests, and the family chariot had gone long out of fashion—he was still the superior of the new-come millionaire, who envied these evidences of antiquity that he affected to despise.

We hardly know how far we should be inclined to go back in fixing upon the easiest days of the landed interest. The Squire West-erns, like the Sir Hildebrand Os-baldistones of some half a century before, had surely as few cares as most people. They appear to have been invariably blessed with most vigorous constitutions, perhaps because the roughness of their up-bringing insured the survival of the fittest. The impunity with which they drenched their brains in strong liquors seems to be a practical refutation of the teachings of Mr John B. Gough and the water-nourished eloquence of Sir Wilfrid Lawson. To be sure, they corrected the excesses of the table by a super-

abundance of healthful exercise in the open air. They took time by the forelock, seating themselves at the dinner-table in the early afternoon; and if they were carried to bed by times, they were up again with the lark, and in the saddle. We do not hear of their doing much in the way of shooting, though Tom Jones was hauled over the coals on the memorable occasion of his poaching the partridge. But many a country gentleman kept his own pack of hounds; and hunting was really hunting in those days. They were not particular whether they followed hare or fox; but hounds that were stanch, though slow, carefully puzzled out the scent, and the master stuck close to his scratch pack in a heavy and cramped country. He came home with tremendous appetite to a board groaning with plenty, served by a troop of clumsy clodhoppers in livery. What strikes us, looking back on these rough-and-ready times, is the length that a very moderate rental was made to go, by a comparatively small expenditure of ready money. The ordinary country gentleman lived contentedly on his estate; and even when his home was in the Midlands or the south-eastern counties, a journey to London was an event. Then he lay in inns, where the larders were so bare, and the accommodation was so rude, that the most unconscionable bills could hardly have been large. Even Squire Western, with nothing more than a good estate, when he went off with his chaplain in pursuit of his daughter, was attended by a troop of mounted retainers. Servants, receiving next to nothing in money wages, were satisfied with their livery suits and the run of their teeth. At home, the profuse housekeeping of the squire was provided almost entire-

ly from his own estate. The beef, mutton, and poultry came from the farm; the game from the covers and fields; the fish from the ponds and streams. He brewed his barrels of ale by the score, and baked his own batches of ponderous household loaves. He could keep a clergyman for state, and by way of company, on the wages of an under-housemaid nowadays. We fancy that his most serious disbursements were to his wine merchant and to his tailor; for men of station really dressed in those days, and the coats on the bench at quarter sessions glistened with silver lace and embroidery. Horse-flesh cost something, but horses were cheap; and when bone was more considered than blood, for the lumbering family-coaches as well as for the hunting-field, the country gentleman often bred his own.

The Squire Westerns, with their good estates, would have scorned to look to cheese-parings. But men on the most modest incomes could do wonders; and nothing illustrates that more forcibly than the story of Mr Peregrine Langton, told in a note to Boswell's 'Johnson.' "The circumstances of Mr Peregrine Langton were these: He had an annuity for life of £200 per annum. He resided in a village in Lincolnshire. The rent of his house, with two or three small fields, was £28. The county he lived in was not more than moderately cheap. His family consisted of a sister—who paid him £18 annually for her board—and a niece. The servants were two maids, and two men in livery. His common way of living at his table was three or four dishes. The appurtenances to his table were neat and handsome. He frequently entertained company at dinner, and then his table was well served with as many dishes as were usual at the tables of the other gentlemen in the neighbourhood. His own appearance, as

to clothes, was genteelly neat and plain. He had always a post-chaise, and kept three horses." And so on. For we are further told that Mr Langton made considerable savings, while spending a tenth of his small income in charity. Imagine what so good a manager might have done in a country that was something more than merely "moderately cheap." If a man in Lincolnshire could live in such style on £200, in Cumberland or Cornwall he might have kept the state of a petty prince on £2000, which was very nearly the rental of Squire Western. Of course the lords of the soil, towards the beginning of the reign of "Farmer George," had fewer claims on them than at present, and fewer extravagant tastes. Macadam had not invented the art of road-making, and they had not to contribute heavily for road-rates. When winter and the weather had made communication impossible for wheeled vehicles, they laid the coach up for the season, resigned themselves to a quieter life than usual, and only went out in jack-boots on horseback, having their ladies occasionally behind them on pillions. They did not dream of ornamental gardening—landscape or otherwise—till after some travelled grand seigneurs had set the modern fashion, imitating his Majesty at Kew or Windsor, or the Scotch premier at Luton Hoo. They had no notion of furrow-draining, and the rushes grew in rank luxuriance on the lower lands, which may partly account for the abundance of hares and the excellent sport to be had with the harriers. They spent nothing on model farming and sanitary cottage arrangements; but then the cottagers and farmers lived like their fathers before them, who had taken things as they found them, with

the fatalism of Turks. They possessed no books except a few well-selected volumes on justice-law, farriery, and divinity; and, with the packs of cards, which were thumbed till they fell to pieces, the backgammon-board did duty for the more costly billiard-table. Perhaps it was because they let the intellectual faculties lie fallow, that they had never occasion for the services of the consulting physician—an inestimable saving, more indirectly than directly. Acute diseases were treated *tant bien que mal* by the country doctor, whose fee was a mere trifle eked out by invitations to dinner or supper; and chronic diseases, if they existed, were left to cure themselves. The elderly housekeeper, or some dame in a neighbouring cottage, was sure to be a mistress in the use of simples, warranted sovereign for everything save broken bones. When Madam was confined, it was quite on the cards that she contented herself with the services of a *sage femme* from the village. Possibly, if she were within a couple of days' drive of a watering-place, she might complain periodically of "vapours"—the precursors, as we fancy, of our modern nerves—when a visit would be prescribed to "the Bath" or "the Wells." But there was none of that autumnal hurrying up to town to invite a peremptory order for wintering abroad, anywhere between Cannes and Cairo. In short, the squire of last century generally made both ends meet easily; and if he did not, the fault was entirely his own.

In the piping times of peace that followed the fall of Napoleon, the landholding class had changed in character. But they were still, as a rule, in very comfortable circumstances, for their incomes had more than kept pace with a more extravagant habit of living. Squire

Western's great-grandson had gone to Oxford or Cambridge from Eton or Harrow. He had travelled the grand tour and seen many men and cities; and whether he had developed his intellect or not, at all events he had come back with more cosmopolitan ideas. We suspect that was the time when country life was most agreeable, looking at the squire as an intelligent being. The old hospitality was still maintained, though hard drinking habits were going out of date. The ordinary country gentleman had his club in St James's; but unless he were in a position to sit for the county or a borough, he never dreamed of taking his family to town for the season. A fortnight now and again in a hotel, to do the sights from Westminster Abbey to St Paul's, or to be presented to the sovereign on the occasion of her marriage, was the utmost the country lady hoped for. On the other hand, county society was excellent. There was a frequent interchange of dinners, with balls and dances for the young people. The roads had been improved under supervision of the turnpike trusts, and a family could cross country after dark without danger of being bogged in some slough of despond. There were country towns with fair hotels and tolerable lodging-houses; with their assembly rooms and theatres and all the rest of it, where some months could be passed in the winter very pleasantly. What with cadets of good families, who had married and settled, gentlemen who had come back from India or the colonies, dignified spinsters of irreproachable connections—there was a very genteel resident society. Visitors from the surrounding country knew the ways of the place; they had the pleasure of condescending affably, being the *crème de la crème* of their company;

and they cut into their rubbers night after night, and lent their names to the patronage of concerts and entertainments. They had their enjoyments cheap, and plenty of them, and seldom experienced the heart-burnings that come of being snubbed and cold-shouldered by one's social superiors. Unless a man be a fool, he need never be embarrassed, if he be in the habit of associating with his equals or inferiors.

Then, when once incomes had readjusted themselves after the war-time, if they fluctuated, the fluctuations, as we have said, were all in the ascending scale. People had begun to have a glimmering of the principles of scientific farming, and to appreciate the advantages of intelligent expenditure. The swampy meadows had been drained, and the arable land brought under more regular rotation. Bad seasons there were, yet the tenants were rarely more than backward with their rents; and if farms were brought into the market they were pretty sure to fetch their value. It was true that the famine prices of the war-time had gone down, which was so much out of the pockets of the landlords, though an infinite blessing for the country at large. But protective duties kept things straight, putting a check on foreign competition, and prices rose in proportion to the shortness of the crops. Men grumbled then as now, no doubt; and whatever come of English farming in the future, grumbling must be inseparable from our atmospheric conditions; but they grumbled with the soothing *arrière-pensée* that things must right themselves in a year or so at latest. The proprietor felt absolute confidence in the permanent value of his property. If he burdened it for improvements or for the benefit of his heirs, he could gauge its capacity for carrying the load.

Then life in the country had grown more refined, and the squires had surrounded themselves with the appliances of luxury. A man no longer vegetated in the wilds of his parish, asserting his superiority by the rough hospitality that might have beseeemed a Saxon franklin, and herding with the rector and the doctor, and one or two fellow-justices of his own stamp. If he seldom went up to town—seeing that posting cost a small fortune, while the roof of the stage-coach was exceedingly uncomfortable—he was always ready with a welcome to visitors. And when visitors came, they were in no hurry to go, not being kept on the alert by perpetual trains picking up at a station within whistle of the lodge. The incommensurable mansion-house had been rebuilt and restored and added to; the new suites of rooms had been elegantly furnished; reading had become a necessity of the age, and there was a choice of books in the library; while, though the staff of servants and hangers-on had been cut down, it was better drilled in its duties. The landlord began to take a pride in his grounds, and make the most of their natural advantages, knowing they would be inspected by critical eyes. Nothing gave him greater pleasure than wakening the friendly jealousy of his brother squires. The gardens and shrubberies were kept to perfection, the drives were carefully gravelled and rolled, the buildings on the home farm were in beautiful condition, and the fields cleansed of weeds. There was a forester to look after the woods and attend specially to the young plantations. The money that was spent upon the place, instead of being squandered in London or Paris, was no excessive strain on the proprietor's banking account, and it made the blessing of many a cottager and his family.

Then the game question had not as yet grown into a class grievance, and caused little or no ill feeling. A tenant took his farm, really knowing that any damage was discounted in his bargain. A labourer might now and then wire a hare, or a couple of disreputable loafers net a covey of partridges; but there were no professionals who made regular consignments to the dealers, and no gangs with blackened faces perambulating the country. The preserves were not sufficiently well stocked to tempt organised raids, and it would have been impossible to carry away any quantity of booty without being tracked along the roads. Consequently the squire, who would nowadays object to making a profit on his game, had none of the expense of an enormous staff of keepers. And in our idea, he got far more enjoyment out of his land than if he had held back for a few bloody *battues* or for driving. He had his small but select kennel of high-bred and well-broken dogs, who watched each glance of his eye and worked to a wave of his hand. He could trace the pedigree of his setters for generations, and prided himself on the race of his spaniels and cockers. He had a guest or a neighbour or two for a quiet day's sport, when he left his dogs to hunt in the turnip-fields or draw the hedgerows and copses for pheasants. As for his hunting, he did that, too, at home, driving to the meet from his own door in his dogcart, when he did not jog forward on his hunter. As the hounds met two or at most three days a-week, there was no need for his stud being very extensive, and he had the forage at prime cost, since it came from his own farm. Even when "Nimrod" wrote his famous articles in the 'Quarterly,' the men who passed the season in the shires were all either very rich or very enthu-

siastic, or both. No one went to Melton or Market-Harborough simply because it was "the right thing to do," and a *distingué* way of getting rid of one's money.

Whatever other causes have been coming into play, we believe the railways have done a great deal towards embarrassing landowners. At first sight the assertion may seem paradoxical, for the railways brought the landowners money in many a way. Not only did the generation of landlords who were contemporary with Hudson and other railway kings get fancy prices from competing lines; not only did they often pocket fabulous damages for the destruction of "amenities" they never appreciated and scarcely missed; not only were they paid for tunnels burrowing under their parks, and for cuttings that were concealed in the inequalities of the landscape,—but there was an immediate advance in the value of farms, now that produce was brought in communication with distant markets, and that artificial manures could be cheaply delivered. They let off building-lots in the neighbourhood of market towns that all of a sudden became centres of traffic; and they found tenants for houses and shootings that had hitherto gone almost a-begging. But then, on the other hand, the flush of money that was lightly come by tempted them into increased expenditure. Men who had been practically annuitants on inelastic incomes, launched out on the strength of these unexpected windfalls. Every country gentleman who takes a pride in his family seat has his dreams of improvements he longs to gratify. The rambling old manor-house was rebuilt in mediæval style, a wing or so was added, and at all events it was refurnished and redecorated. Now that the way to town was made so smooth

and quick, everybody took to running up on the slightest provocation. The flying visits paid in the "season" came to be gradually prolonged, till the children of the country folk who used to "do the sights," and delight in gazing into the shop-windows, found themselves taking mansions upon lease in Mayfair and Tyburnia. There is a blunt old proverb, that one fool makes many; and when one family of distinction took to the fashion of going to town, their neighbours and rivals felt bound to follow suit. That might be all very pleasant, and by no means imprudent, for gentlemen with unencumbered acres and few children; but it was the easy descent that leads down towards debt and destitution to fathers who had a dozen of children to provide for, and were crippled by the portions of their brothers and sisters. And society in town breeds expensive habits, expanding the ideas almost insensibly to extravagant proportions. The carriage that served in the country would make a scandal and a spectacle in the Park. If you ride and put your daughters on horseback in Rotten Row, you must get horses that will do credit to their style and attractions. There is no setting limits to dressmakers' bills, nor are boxes at the opera to be hired for nothing. State diners in London come far more frequently than in the country, and cost infinitely more; while a single bill in very modest style will swallow a hundred or two before you know where you are. We do not talk of the latest phase of our modern Arabian Nights' entertainments, where a suite of saloons is embowered in rare ferns and tropical plants, so that the bill for champagne and plovers' eggs becomes a mere bagatelle compared to the florist's.

Then the house in town makes a

seductive school of dissipation for the heir, who has the reversion of the estate to speculate on. His aspiring tastes lead him to seek the society of men of far greater means than his own. He makes acquaintances in select clubs, gradually imbibing inbred ideas of the fitness of things. It is the old story of Squire Hazledean and his son, so inimitably told in Lord Lytton's 'My Novel.' What may be merely indiscretions with his friends, become folly and something worse in his own case. He draws to the knot of loungers in the bow-window, who have so many irons in the fire, any of which may scorch his fingers. He joins in making up parties for Newmarket and the Leger: if he does not keep race-horses or stand in with a confederacy himself, he gets into the way of making a book, and these tiny volumes often afford heavy reading. After a quiet dinner, you must do something to kill the evening, more especially now that men drink only in moderation. Even at whist with guinea points one can get through a good deal of money; and there are lively round games borrowed from Continental casinos, where the banker who keeps the table against all comers may quickly come to serious grief. Hunting is a manly and invigorating sport, but it is more likely to make a man healthy than wealthy, if he takes to following it in the fashionable counties. Then few forms of social society are more costly than informal little gatherings in the circles of the *demi-monde*. And when one has made the turn by Newmarket and Melton and St John's Wood, he almost invariably lands among the accommodating "men of business" who have their chambers in the neighbourhood of the Albany and the Burlington. Even without going deep in notes of hand and post-obits,

or hurrying to the brink of a precipice in the rake's downhill progress, very limited engagements of the kind hang round the neck like a millstone, which swells in bulk even quicker than a betting-book. Marriage is the obvious way out of the wood, and the brilliant figure a man has cut in society may help him to a profitable matrimonial investment. If he have fair expectations, a *parvenu* father-in-law may be content to accept his promises of reformation and to pay down a handsome dowry in consideration of a contingent jointure. If the spendthrift sell himself for money and does reform, we have nothing to say to his future career, so far as his being hard up is concerned. But gay young gentlemen who are in the practice of self-indulgence are apt to be fascinated by pretty faces; and when they have been moving in circles rather above their own sphere, they are more likely than not to prefer rank to riches. Then, in three cases out of four, they may bid adieu to the prospect of comfortable relations with their banker, if the family estate be only a moderate one. The bride has been used to a certain style, and is all the more inclined to insist upon show and appearances that she feels she has derogated in the choice of a husband; while, should she outlive her spouse, in her character of annuitant she will hamper her son for many a year to come when the times may have grown hard as they are at present.

Nor was the general commercial prosperity that preceded the recent depression by any means a gain for the old stock of country gentlemen. Rather the reverse, indeed, though it raised the value of land and brought fabulous rentals to the proprietors of Highland shootings. The new men who are amassing great fortunes in trade, and liberally

discounting their glowing expectations, or who enriched themselves even more rapidly by financial speculation, spread themselves all over the face of the country. Wherever they went they spent profusely. The old country society found itself entangled, in spite of itself, in a race of ostentation and lavish disbursements. Even very sensible men could hardly help themselves. When you have always made it your boast to give your guests generous entertainment, it is not in human nature to hear with complacency that people fare still more sumptuously with the new man in his brand-new mansion on the other side of the parish. Or take the heavy item of charities and local contributions. Gentlemen with ancestral traditions of liberality specially dislike being eclipsed in that way by *parvenus* who subscribe for the sake of buying social consideration. And families who might have ventured to stand on their county position have been carried off their legs in the rush of London. House-rent, servants' wages, almost everything, from horses down to bouquets and kid gloves, had gone up enormously, and society demanded sensation in the latest fashion of entertainments. The habits with which they familiarised themselves in London were carried down into the country with the new carriage and the man-cook and the town-bred footmen.

When the times of prosperity were succeeded by depression, the new man either came to absolute grief or could with comparative ease draw in his horns. Nothing could be more natural; for, as we already observed, reverses are among the incidents of industrial life. When it is notorious that the schemes you have promoted have "smashed up," you are rather admired as a *bon joueur* if you accept adversity with

resignation and slip smilingly to the bottom of the ladder. If your mills are working half time, or if there are no new orders coming in to your shipbuilding yards, it is a very sufficient reason for letting your country-house, and sending your plate and pictures to Christie and Manson's. But the county gentleman who had been gradually launching out, could hardly draw in again so lightly. His growing embarrassments had come of simply outrunning the constable with no reasonable justification. He had not been spending more freely on the strength of an unprecedented briskness in business, or happy hits in "Turks," or "Guano Loans." To retrench very visibly would be to confess himself a fool; nor is it easy to take the first step in that direction. He might keep a horse or two the less, discharge a footman or so and a couple of under-keepers, and see his friends a little less frequently; but he was seldom equal to the courage of taking the bull by the horns, letting his place, and going elsewhere to economise. He fell deeper and deeper into difficulties as he persisted in playing the hypocrite.

So now that the great agricultural interest has fallen upon unprecedentedly evil times, the distress has found many a landowner in anything but a condition to face it. Take a man who has nominally £10,000 a-year—a very handsome county gentleman's fortune, even in these days; but then his estates are strictly settled, so that he can only do his best with the *liferent*. That £10,000 is the figure which is shown in the *Doomsday-book*; but there is a *dowager's jointure* to be deducted—we know cases where there were as many as three jointures to be paid—and he is burdened, besides, by other settlements which he has never succeeded in clearing off. There is interest running on

his loans for permanent improvements, and their profits to him are comprehended in that nominal £10,000. We may assume as a liberal estimate that his actual income may be £6000. His rents had hitherto been paid with fair punctuality, and had been even more punctually anticipated. Now his farmers come to the rent audit with excuses instead of cash—and the worst is that the excuses are but too well founded. It is hardly worth while putting pressure on them; nor would he care to apply it if he could. His fathers before him have had the credit of being liberal landlords, and had always lived on the best of terms with their tenants. Pressure would only be mutually embarrassing, for already he has more than one farm on his hands. Already he has been placed in a false position, since a peer in his neighbourhood, who is enormously rich, has remitted half a year's rental out of his accumulations, and he has to listen to praises of this noble lord's liberality which ring like reproaches and are certainly hard hints. That example he cannot possibly follow, but he will have to make a virtue of necessity and concede time and a reduction. In the meantime he is desperately hard up for ready-money. To say nothing of heavy bills long outstanding, for which the tradesmen are consciously biding their time, he has to keep a large establishment going; and he has to cultivate the farms that are waiting for occupants in the forlorn hope of making some profit out of them. For long his communications with his country bankers have been a source of constant worry. His rents have been drawn out almost as fast as they were paid in; and the remittances he made to a London firm for use in town have been a standing grievance. Now the bank is civil but unconciliatory. Many

of its clients are in a bad way; it has been contracting its credits to impoverished agriculturists, and while willing to employ its money advantageously, it more than hints at substantial security. That is precisely what the applicant cannot give. The only general investment he holds is in some local railway shares, and these have long ago been deposited elsewhere. He may think that the bank is dealing hardly with him; but proud as he is, he cannot reasonably take offence, nor can he hope to better himself by shifting his account.

His position becomes painful and almost humiliating. Since his childhood he has always been in easy circumstances; he has never been used to deny himself anything; and though his personal habits may be simple, he has indulged them, such as they are. If he were smashed up, stock, lock, and barrel, like some of his commercial acquaintances, and compelled to make an open avowal of poverty, he could brave his fate with dignity and courage. But he is only pinched as yet, not crushed: and in the belief that things must work round some time, he is constrained to hold on and keep up appearances. Petty vexations sting him at every turn. No wonder that he becomes anxious and careworn; that his sleep is haunted by the spectres of claims unpaid, which hold a *levée* by his bedside at his uncomfortable awakening. Everybody about him, except the dependants whose wages he has to find, are hard up too; and when any respectable parishioner is in difficulty, he naturally has recourse to the squire. It is immoral to be generous out of the money of your creditors; it is painful to refuse when you would willingly have been liberal, and to know that you are probably being cursed as a cur-

mudgeon. The farmer who is being bullied by his banker and manure merchant, the cottager who is threatened with distraint and eviction, can never be persuaded that the master of that splendid manor-house, with its smoking chimneys and its many servants, is otherwise than an exceedingly wealthy man. And the squire's children, who, like himself, have been nursed in every comfort, are much of the same way of thinking. The odds are, that, having married in his youthful prime, he has been blessed with a luxuriant growth of olive-plants. He has a son in the Guards, and another in diplomacy; a third is developing his muscles at the university, and two of the boys are at public schools. The elder brethren have a way of anticipating their allowances—he has a shrewd suspicion that they outrun them considerably; while school-fees and boarding-house charges must be paid to the day. The pinch is tight enough in the meantime, but it is likely soon to become insupportable; and he counts the time to the inevitable day of disclosure, like the trustee who has been guilty of embezzlement of funds. And the girls—one of whom is still in the schoolroom—are causing him anxiety in another way. It is comparatively little that he must pay, or owe, for their dresses, though the bills of the Mesdames Elyse and Therese are no joke. But their mother has set her heart on establishing them advantageously, and has given them the advantages not only of the best education but of the best society. In the last year or two, when the financial horizon has been darkening, it is they who have been the argument for continuing to go to town for the season. Heaven knows for how many dinners and operaboxes they have been held respon-

sible! And all that outlay would be so much waste in place of a prudent investment, were it to be stopped now of a sudden, when the eldest girls are in the freshness of their first good-looks. Blanche and Adeline might bid adieu to their most eligible *soupirants* were they to take leave of the house in Mayfair, and the summer visits to Homburg, and be banished to the picturesque back settlements of Loamshire. Yet there will be the other horn of the dilemma, should the gentlemen propose, when it comes to a question of dowries. Few men in society are so absolutely disinterested as not to look for some fortune with their wives when the father leads the life of a man of affluence; but money down must be out of the question, and it will be much if credit can be mustered for the *trousseau*.

There was a time when residing on the Continent was the natural refuge for the impecunious. One could do it, too, without economising in the Irish fashion of the Dodd family, so graphically described by Lever. Twenty years ago, or even less, you could get excellent society, and gaiety to boot, for a very reasonable sum. Nor need you bury yourself in the *Residenz* of some petty German principality like Pumpnickel, where even middle-class arrivals like Mrs Osborne and Major Dobbin were welcomed by a minister who was eaten up by *ennui*. Brussels was always bright: the *braves Belges* were always cordial to the English, and the town was cheap beyond the dreams of modern frugality. Even Paris was by no means extravagant. In the Tuscan capital or Naples you might have the piano of a frescoed palace for a bagatelle. The natives of Pau and Nice had not been demoralised by a descent of reckless American and

wealthy English *malades imaginaires*. Now that is all changed. Prices have been steadily going up as the old quarters in the cities have been pulled down. The pretty Belgian capital has been Hausmanised like Paris, and a mansion in the neighbourhood of the Park and the palace is about as valuable a property as a hotel in the Champs Elysées. If you mean to be "in the swim" of the fashionable world, you must take up your quarters in a good street. Cooks and coachmen and male domestics generally know as well how to "set a vally on themselves" as the drummer-boys young Baily speaks of in 'Martin Chuzzlewit.' Jobbing a suitable equipage is cheaper, perhaps, in the long-run than buying it. Then foreign society nowadays regards English immigrants who come among them with a certain distrust. It suspects their real motive—is inclined to assume that they are come abroad for economy, and resents that as an insult. If you mean to overcome that unpleasant prepossession, you must "make your proofs" of being rich, in which case you had much better have stayed in England. Of course you may go to Bruges, where you have opportunities of studying medieval architecture and canal scenery to your heart's content; or to Pisa, where you can enjoy a delicious climate, with the ineffable tranquillity of an entire absence of distraction. But if you are to bury your head in the sand like the ostrich, in the belief that nobody is looking at you or caring about you, then again you might as well have remained in England.

Perhaps the most discouraging sign in the present state of depression is, that landowners of intelligence who speak cheerfully as to a speedy turn for the better, can give no tangible reason for the

hopes they express. No one doubts that nature will relent sooner or later, and that a series of fat years will follow the lean. But the pessimists, on the other hand, point with desolating precision to those permanent causes for discouragement that seem likely to be steadily aggravated. It is not our purpose here to weigh conflicting arguments or analyse long columns of desponding statistics. What is certain is, that the British farmer will have to face such formidable rivalry as he has never experienced before. No wonder that the landowner feels cause for anxiety as he casts about for the means of tiding over a pressure which may probably increase for a time under the most favourable circumstances. The ultimate burden of the competition must fall upon him; though, so far as the actual tiller of the soil is concerned, the balance will readjust itself sooner or later. The newspapers are anything but pleasant reading for him, let him glance his eye over their pages as he will. The paragraphs about farms falling out of lease, about reductions of rents or returns of a percentage on them, have become everyday commonplaces. Then there are the announcements of estates put up for sale, when the bids come ridiculously short of the reserve price. There are cheery intimations of the long-looked for revival of our East India trade, thanks chiefly to the shipments of Indian grain. He learns to his disgust that that Indian grain trade is growing almost in arithmetical progression, and threatening already to undersell American importations; while the effects are being sensibly felt even by Russians and Roumanians, who used to monopolise the competition with the English farmers. Special commissioners have been making the tour of North America, and re-

porting on the balance-sheets of monster farms anywhere between the Red River and the Sacramento valley; and railways are being laid through virgin prairies which offer pioneers a field that is practically unlimited: while those landowners who had thought of "hedging" upon cattle-breeding, hear of prairie-bred beasts put on the trains in Minnesota or Illinois, and delivered for shipment on the Atlantic seaboard for a trifle. And ingenious inventors are taxing their ingenuity to perfect the arrangements for the transport of dead meat. Cheshire and Somersetshire may find it as bad as the cattle-plague when their cheeses are being under-sold from Canada and the States; and we are told that we may see Bulgarian poultry delivered in Leadenhall Market at eightpence a-piece. It is all a literal illustration of the familiar old saying, that what is one man's meat is another man's poison; and the landowner cannot help shuddering as he faces the facts that are full of the promise of unspeakable blessings to consumers.

We would fain believe that there must be a silver lining to the clouds, and that light sooner or later must break through the darkness; for the pictures of the future, as a gloomy fancy paints them, are anything but inspiring to lovers of Old England. There are many who have not the luck to possess land of their own who take a pride in the landed aristocracy of England; who delight in the pleasures of our rural life, and love the beauties of landscapes that are unrivalled in their way. If we are to listen to the prophets of the impending dispensation, we shall look upon melancholy changes ere long. We can only hope that these calamities may not come in our day. Changes, and great changes, there must be; but, detesting Radicalism in every

shape, we fervently trust they will not be revolutionary; for cheap beef and bread would be bought too dear at the sacrifice of much that is most graceful in our existence. Changes, we suppose, there must be, nor need they be altogether undesirable. It seems sure that, to begin with, and for years to come, the tenant will have the whip-hand in driving his bargains. Cases have already come under our knowledge, in which, far from seeking prolonged security of tenure, he has been reluctant to sign a lease upon any terms. He has shown himself exacting in urging stipulations which a couple of years ago would have been scouted as ridiculous. What is more, we know that he has had his way, simply because the landlord felt himself at his mercy; we have seen easy rents reduced by 30 per cent, while lime and drain-pipes have been laid down gratis. A picturesque and most commodious old farmhouse has been half transformed into a garish modern villa, sorely in opposition to the taste of the proprietor, because it suited Mrs Farmer's notions of gentility. In the instances to which we refer, there happened to be little ground-game. But nothing is more probable than that English shooting will be revolutionised by sheer force of contract, without any necessity for legislative interference. If the excess of game, which is reared for the poulterers on many estates, were cut down, for our own part we should not be sorry. Domesticating herds of hares, and rearing flocks of hand-fed pheasants for the markets, is one of the modern innovations we could well dispense with. But the stipulations of shrewd speculators in the soil are hardly likely to stop there. When the farmer does not indulge in the luxury of a little shooting on his

own account, and insist upon the game being leased with the fields, he will grudge the loss of each blade of wheat and each turnip, although moderate damage should have been considered in the rent. On the whole, he will feel easier in his mind and more satisfied in the prospect of garnering his crops, if, before entering on his occupation, the hares and rabbits have been killed down as inexorably as the stoats and weasels. The sight of a young rabbit sitting up among the shooting wheat, with its ears vibrating to the action of its jaws, is pain and grief to him; and it is neither with the eyes of the keen courser nor of the gourmand, that he sees the hare go lolloping over the furrows among his turnips. The preserver who breeds in his park and on his home-farms, will have to wire the *enceinte* of his enclosures as some of the German territorial magnates do; and when his pheasants take their flights a-field, he may reckon on having looked his last upon them.

But, indeed, getting up any head of game may be no easy matter in England, as it is proposed to remodel it on the lines of the industrial farming of the future. We are told that if we are to keep the land in cultivation, we must go to work on either a grand scale or a very small one, absolutely sacrificing the ornamental to the practical. We are either to have allotments cultivated by the spade, or vast farms on the model of that of the co-operative associations, which groups of American capitalists have organised in their Western States.

In that case, we can only say that many a man who will never own an acre, many a jaded toiler in smoky cities, many an artisan who looks forward to his summer outings, will sympathise in the sorrows of the embarrassed land-

owner who has been forced to sacrifice all he loved most. Rural England is only to hold her own by the highest farming on the most ascetic principles. The first thing is to clear the richly-wooded landscape, and lay it out in enclosures adapted for machinery. Those straggling hedgerows, like copses in miniature, with their wealth of blossoms and berries in the season, are to be ruthlessly grubbed. The shady lanes that go winding beneath bowery foliage are to be straightened and smoothed away. The hedgerow timber is to be cut with the hedges, for, like the hedges, it gives shelter and nesting-places for the birds. Our sweetest songsters will be kept down more effectually than by the Italian practice of serving them as *rôtés* and *entrées*. The nightingale, when he comes upon his summer visit, will miss the elm-trees and the sweet-flowering horse-chestnuts that used to hang over the village pool, and will fly about in desolate bewilderment, seeking a nesting-place and finding none. The cuckoo will turn his note into a cry of grating remonstrance, for he will have to fly far ere he finds thick copses or hedgerows, and may hunt in vain for a solitary hedge-sparrow's nest. The swallows will feel equally outraged; for the picturesque old homesteads with the quaint gables, the thatched barns with the hanging eaves, the venerable mill that from time immemorial had mirrored itself in the smooth waters of the mill-pond, will all have disappeared. In place of them he shall have those "bar-racks" described in the letters of the 'Times' "special commissioner" in America, where men drilled in gangs under non-commissioned officers will sleep in barrack-rooms by twenties and fifties. The bleak walls and the

bald lines of the roof, guiltless of the creepers which might harbour "vermin," will be masterpieces of economical architecture. The view from the door over the expanse of golden wheat and waving meadow-hay will gladden the eye of the speculative shareholder who looks solely to the number of loads or the amount of bushels per acre. Tight-drawn wire-fences running along the sides of the Dutchlike ditches will divide a succession of rectangular enclosures. When the citizen passes a night in the country he will be awakened in the freshness of the dewy morn by the shrill whistle of the steam-engine in place of the clarion of the early village cock; and your soul will be gladdened as you take your walks abroad by the whir and hum of "machinery in motion." Nor will the precincts of the venerable Hall be spared, should the descendant of its former lords still have the means of occupying it. The capitalists who contract with him for the tillage of the land, before signing the deed that makes them his masters, will insist on his getting rid of public nuisances. The rooks that caw around the ancestral roof-tree must be proscribed; and as they have a habit of sticking to their vested rights, the groups of elms and beeches that made the glory of the park must all come down and be sent to the wood-yard.

As it will be with the shooting, so with the hunting. The coverts that used seldom to be drawn blank will have to be grubbed; and it will be of the less consequence that there will be few sportsmen to pursue the foxes, were there any possibility of finding pleasure in the pursuit. The impoverished squire will sit sulking and solitary in his lonely halls; the substantial yeoman will have emigrated or taken

service with the new-fangled agricultural associations, or gone into trade in the neighbouring town. The directors of these establishments will be too fully occupied to have days to spare for the unprofitable folly of field-sports. "Merry England" will become working England with a vengeance. And if business men ran down by train from the cities, bringing their bagfoxes or red-herrings along with them, there would be no facing those invisible wire-fences; while the "going" would be even worse among the suburban spade allotments, where, like the memorable run in the Middlesex country, described, we think, by Lord Alvanley, the horses were up to their hocks among the cucumber-frames.

Possibly our sombre fancy may be hurrying us too fast and too far, though no farther than finds substantial justification in foreshadowings by "agricultural commissioners," despatched upon circular tours, and in the specifics for the existing depression prescribed in letters to the journals. After all, nature and rural geography must in the end have something to say to the matter. You cannot level the Malvern and Mendip hills, not to speak of the highlands of Yorkshire and Cumberland. Do what you will with the chalk steepes of the Sussex downs, they will always pay better in mutton than wheat. You may lay the broad flats of the eastern counties out in monster grain-crops, and may turn the pastures of the Midlands into miniature pampas, carrying herds of cattle that run half wild; but there are shires that can hardly be farmed scientifically, unless you first begin by flattening them out. There are districts, happily for the lovers of the picturesque, where the soil is so poor as to scare away capital. The fantastically-shaped fields will still swell and

fall, and tumble down hills and roll round corners; the copse-like hedges may just as well be left to struggle over the rolling mounds of gravel or the banks that are overrun with brambles and saturated by land-springs; the copses themselves will yield more satisfactorily if you leave them to be cut periodically for poles and fagots. There are heaths that will never pay for the enclosing, and pine-woods that thrive very tolerably where anything else would starve. There can hardly be a doubt that the country will suffer in its picturesque aspects: woods and hedgerow trees will be felled, at the instigation of the farmers, by landowners, who will be glad to put the price in their pockets; old holdings will be broken up, and old homesteads will be cleared away. Rows of trim new cottages that it may be hoped will be more healthy than those they replace, will supplant the gems of ivy-grown antiquity that have delighted our Linnels and Birket Fosters. We must recognise these grave permanent causes that are tending towards our agricultural revolution. Yet we may trust that the revolution must at worst be gradual; that a succession of more prosperous seasons may put a drag on the inevitable movement; and that panic-stricken proprietors may not show a foolish haste in doing damage it will be impossible to repair, and making concessions it will be difficult to retract. In difficulties as many of them are, they have a trying ordeal before them; but though we fear they must submit to sacrifices and changes, they may have relief in ways they hardly foresee. Panic is always prone to exaggerate, and men are never so apt to take pessimist views as when they are suddenly awakened from a sense of security to deal with unprecedented and unfamiliar difficulties.

THE BROADS AND RIVERS OF NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK.

In the autumn and winter, the wild-fowl flying southward and westward in search of less rigorous climes are arrested by the projection of the Norfolk coast, and see beneath them, but a few miles inland, the gleaming surface of lagoon and river, and vast expanses of reed-beds. If they flew all England over they could find no spot so fit for them as this district of marsh and shallow, lake and reed; so down they drop and stay until the spring lures them back to their more northern breeding-places. All do not return; the gun, the decoy, and the snare thin their ranks; but many also, which have found the loneliest spots in this lonely region, are so fascinated that they stay to breed, and then the collector too often finds out their retreat.

The smaller migrants too, which visit us in the spring for the purposes of breeding, are arrested by this obtrusive Norfolk, so that it is a county favoured beyond others in an ornithological sense. It has been said that "all England can be carved out of Norfolk," meaning that there is every variety of land and scenery (save mountains) within its borders. A triangular gap in it will represent the flat and watery Broad district on its eastern tide, while the rest consists of hills, woods, enclosures, wide open commons and heaths, and rich corn and pasture lands. Our present concern is with the Broad district.

The term *Broad* is peculiar to Norfolk. Its etymology is obvious—namely, a *broadening* out of the rivers into lakes, the Broad being intimately connected with the rivers, which in some cases flow through them, and in others are only divided from them by a reed-

bed. Whittleseamere and other parts of the Fen district were the counterparts of the Broad in many respects; but the character of the Fens has so much changed since their drainage, that it is to Norfolk only that one can now look for the wildness and solitude of marsh and mere so dear to the naturalist and sportsman.

If you take the map and draw a line from Pakefield, on the Suffolk coast, 27 miles north to Happingburgh, and then across to Norwich, 18 miles inland, then with a curve south-east back to Pakefield, you will have a triangle which comprehends the chief of the Broad and Rivers—a district for the most part as flat as a billiard-table, where water and land strive for the mastery, and come to a delightful compromise. This tract of country is intersected by three principal rivers, and dotted with a score of lakes. First, below Norwich (a city of nightingales, which are very numerous in its suburbs), the smaller river Yare flows into the larger river Wensum, and then the united stream, under the name of the Yare, flows a sinuous course of 35 miles, until it debouches into the sea at Yarmouth.

For all this distance the river is broad and deep, and in the lower half the tide ebbs and flows, "backing" up the water even up to Norwich. The natural fall of the river is only four inches in the mile; the rise and fall of the tide is very little. There are no locks, and only one bridge, which is a "swing one," so that the Yare is the perfection of a navigable river. For five miles below Norwich the banks are hilly and wooded, but afterwards the water is bordered by tall reeds, and beyond the reeds are miles of marsh.

The only Broads on the upper part of the Yare are Surlingham and Rockland, both of limited extent; or rather the open water has been so reduced by the rapid growth of the reeds and aquatic vegetation that these appear to be small. Just above Yarmouth is the magnificent tidal lake called Breydon. Roughly speaking, it is five miles long by two-thirds of a mile wide, and at high water, when the muds are covered, it forms a noble expanse of water—the deeper channel of the river through it being marked by painted posts to guide the vessels sailing across. At low water the muds or flats on either side are dry, and attract myriads of wild-fowl, which find their food on the soft ooze, and in winter afford sport and sustenance to the gunner in his flat-bottomed punt. One of these men told us that he once cut a small canal, about a foot deep and three feet wide, through the ooze, from the channel to the bank near his cottage, a distance of 100 yards, so that he might get ashore at low water without wading through the mud. In three weeks, such was the action of the tide, the depth was 6 feet; and now it is 17 feet at low water, with a proportionate width. And as men win immortality by various means, he is proud that it is now called by his name—Calver's drain.

The river Waveney also enters in at the top of Breydon, and is navigable for seven-and-twenty miles southward and westward through Beccles to Bungay in a sinuous-like course. The peculiarities of the Waveney are its depth, which is 20 feet close to the banks in places, and the surpassing clearness of its water. While sailing up it you may see, yards beneath you, the tops of waving weeds and shoals of frightened fish, while the blue of its surface, and the white of the

waves which rise at the bows and eddy astern, are only paralleled by the blue and white in the sky above. A canal, or cut of three miles in length, connects the Yare at Reedham with the Waveney at Haddiscoe. A mile and a half from the latter place is a beautiful sheet of water, two miles long, named Fritton Broad, which is interesting, inasmuch as there are two decoys upon it still worked by the proprietors. A wide cut called Oulton Dyke connects the mid-length of the Waveney with Oulton Broad, 100 acres in extent, and the most civilised of all the Broads, inasmuch as it has a village on its banks and always a fleet of yachts on its surface. At the lower end of the Broad is a lock which gives access to a tidal lake called Lake Lothing, two miles long—then comes Lowestoft harbour and the sea.

Returning to the lower end of Breydon Water, we find the mouth of the Bure, which flows from the north-west and is navigable up to Aylsham, a distance of 40 miles by river. It is up this fine river and its tributaries that the wildest and most interesting of the Broads lie. First, as we go up, is a sheet of water with many arms known as Ormesby, Filby, and Rollesby Broads, containing together about 800 acres. These are not accessible from the main river except by small boats, and along a dyke bearing the euphonious name of Muck Fleet. "Fleet" is a Norfolk word for shallow,—a fleet place is where there is but little water. A few miles higher up we come to the Thurne, a broad river which communicates with Hickling Broad, Whiteslea, Horsey Mere, Heigham Sounds, and Martham Broad. Of these Hickling is the largest, covering some 400 acres. All the Broads are very shallow, but this is the shallowest, its depth not exceeding

four feet six inches, except in the "channel."

Its water is beautifully clear, and its bottom is of hard yellow gravel, over which shoals of fish scud away as one's boat approaches. All the other Broads have bottoms of black mud of an unknown depth, and so soft that a yacht's anchor will not hold in it, so that large blocks of iron ballast are used instead, and will not drag through the "putty," as the mud is locally called. Returning to the Bure, we come to the mouth of the river Ant, which leads to Barton Broad, 200 acres in extent, and to Stalham Broad. Again returning to the course of the Bure, we come to a group of Broads—Walsham, Ranworth, Decoy Broad, Hoveton Great and Little Broads, Salhouse, and lastly, Wroxham—a large and very beautiful Broad, where regattas are frequently held. Above Wroxham is Belaugh Broad. To sum up, there are here 200 miles of navigable rivers, and 5000 acres of water in the Broads.

The marshes around the group of Broads up the "north river," as the Bure is usually called, are left in their pristine wildness; but in the lower waters there is a very complete system of drainage. The river-surface, as a rule, is much higher than the adjacent marshes, which, as the moisture was pumped out of their peaty and spongy soil, shrank and sank just as a sponge does in drying, until they left the river-level several feet above them. A low embankment on either side of the river confines its waters, and at the outlets of the drains are pumps which lift the water out of them into the river. These pumps were all formerly, and many still are, worked by means of small windmills; and it is a curious sight, on looking over the wide marshes, to see the scores of windmills all

twirling merrily round. Steam is now used at the outlets of the more important drains, and does the work more effectually. Even now the water often gains the mastery. Last winter there were very heavy floods. The millers in the upper reaches, above the navigation, headed up the water for storage until they simultaneously became alarmed at the quantity, and then they opened their flood-gates, and a vast body of water inundated the lower part of Norwich, and covered all the marshes, so that from Norwich to Yarmouth was a vast lake. The marshes were also inundated in the summer, or rather the time of year which should have been summer in this watery year of 1879; and it was a singular and striking sight to see the great expanse of smooth, steadily flowing water, with here and there a pollard willow or a boathouse standing alone above it. It was before the marsh hay was cut, and some of the occupiers towed large spars about over the submerged grass to prevent, as far as possible, the mud in suspension from settling upon it.

It might be imagined that the scenery of such a flat and marshy country must be most uninteresting. Yet it is not so, except, perhaps, near the sea, where the vegetation is not so luxuriant as it is in the upper reaches.

On either side of the river and around the Broads is a dense wall of emerald-green reeds from seven to ten feet in height. Then come the yellow iris flowers, tall and bending rushes and bulrushes, the sweet sedge with its curious catkins; tangled feathery grasses, in such variety that, as you stand up to your neck in them, you may pluck a dozen kinds without moving; blue clusters of forget-me-nots, foxgloves, spikes of purple loose-strife, and broad tufts of valerian; bushes of

woody nightshade; and, sweeter than all, masses upon masses, all the way along, of the cream-white and strong-scented meadow-sweet;—these are what make the immediate banks changing panoramas of kaleidoscopic beauty. Then on the water, beneath the reeds and across shallow bays, and in the little “pulks” or miniature Broads which everywhere open off the river, are lilies, yellow and white, in dazzling abundance. Here and there are tropical tangles of wood; a picturesque house in a cluster of trees, or a reed-stack floating on the river with a supporting wherry hidden somewhere beneath it.

The far-reaching marsh has a beauty of its own, that of changing colour as the wind bows the many-tinted grasses and flowers, and the wind-waves and cloud-shadows sweep along; while everywhere are the snowy sails of yachts and the red-brown canvas of the wherries. The atmospheric effects, too, are unusually beautiful, and sunrises and sunsets glow with a warmth of colour that gives the placid lagoons an almost unearthly loveliness; while, when the sun is set, the mists often show lakes and ships and islands that vanish with the dawn. Colour is seen far away; a group of red and white cattle, or the scarlet berries of the guelder rose entwined around some fallen willow, with a gleam of sunshine upon them, will lighten up miles of marsh. Then the flight of hawk and heron, snipe and wild duck, the splash of fish, and the scattering rush of the small fry as a pike makes his raid upon them, are incidents of every hour.

Whether one is observant or not, one cannot help “brushing elbows” with the bird-life of the Broads. It is not the purpose of this article to describe the many rare species which visit or nest in the district,

but rather to call attention to the everyday life therein. Embark with us, then, on board one of the small but comfortable river-yachts, and see what a single summer’s day will show you. As we sail up the “north river” we see constantly the coots and water-hens as they swim in and out of the “rond,” as the reed-covered water-washed bank is called. Every now and then a wild duck or widgeon or a brood of flappers is disturbed by our passage; and as we sweep round corners, herons rise on lazy wing, or, if out of gunshot, look suspiciously at us. High in air the marsh-harrier, the “Norfolk hawk,” scans the marshes with hungry eye; then we turn suddenly as if trying to charge an oak coppice, but a narrow “gat-way” reveals itself, and we glide through it on to Wroxham Broad, which is skirted by the river, the only division being a narrow “rond.” On the other side beyond the reeds the land rises in wooded undulations, with park-like spaces between. All around the Broad is a dense and sheer wall of bright green reeds eight feet high, with a yellow water-mark on their lower stems. In and out of this the coots, water-hens, grebes, and wild ducks are continually splashing and swimming. While our man is making the yacht snug for the night, we go in the jolly-boat and push her anywhere into the reeds and wait. The black-headed buntings, the reed-wrens, and the bearded tits gather close around us, and chatter and scold us vigorously; for very little search would reveal their nests. A kingfisher flashes along and perches on a swaying reed within a few yards, and dives in again and again for the tiny roach and bream. Look, within ten yards are a pair of great crested grebes and three young ones,—tiny black balls, which their parents

are feeding. These dive rapidly and rise with a fish two inches long in the beak; this is at once transferred to the young ones, which are also making ludicrous attempts to dive like their seniors. It is the last week in June, and the cuckoos have come to the Broad in numbers; why, we do not know. But they are flying across and perching on the trees, and calling loudly to each other, often with a note broken into three syllables—thus, cuck-cuck-oo. A fortnight later there will scarcely be one there, and the distinctive cry will have ceased. Over the marsh, on the opposite side of the river, two brown owls are hawking in the bright sunshine, and, from the number of times they swoop, with great success. Overhead, no less than five snipes are sweeping and circling about, and as they descend for short distances with quivering tail and wing-tips, we hear that curious bleating or buzzing sound ("lamming" the Norfolk people call it, because of its similarity to the bleating of lambs) which is a characteristic of the snipe in the breeding season.

In the distance are many white birds flying about, and from them arises a noise like that of a rookery. We cross the Broad and the river, and enter a narrow water-lane between the reeds. This presently expands into a "pulk" studded with water-lilies, between which numbers of coots and water-hens are threading their way. The water is only a foot deep and very clear, so that we can see hundreds of big bream swimming lazily about, while smaller roach and rudd play on the surface. Here and there, as we slowly progress, we startle a basking pike. Now we are in a passage only just wide enough for the boat. Tall reeds rise on either hand, and nothing else is visible but the blue

sky above. There goes a water-rail, and if we could push the boat in the reeds for a few feet we should find its nest. Then we emerge into the open water of Hoveton Great Broad, and as we approach its lower end the air is filled with the black-headed gulls which swoop close around and deafen us with their cries. Among this labyrinth of reeds and narrow water-lanes and tufts of long grasses, they breed in large numbers. On every little hillock of grass you see their eggs; and the water is dotted with the young ones, from the little yellow-and-brown ball of down just hatched, to those fully fledged and just able to fly. It is a sight worth seeing and to be remembered. Yet it cannot compare with Scoulton Mere, also in Norfolk, but out of the Broad district, where there is the largest colony known in England. As the summer wanes, the birds take their departure to the sea-coast. This end of the Broad is extremely shallow, but the mud is of a great depth. It illustrates the process which is going on year by year in the Broads: the vegetation grows rankly and dies down, and so adds a layer both in thickness and extent to the shallow margin. When, by a repetition of this process, the mud reaches the surface, the roots of the reeds and the grasses make it firmer each year, until at last it can be drained and turned into dry land. Some of the smaller Broads are growing up very fast.

Such is the usual scene of a summer's day. In the winter it is very wild and lonesome, but there are then great numbers of wild-fowl—common and rare.

Of the birds which frequent the Broads, the heron is the most conspicuous, and it is to be seen everywhere. There are two or three large and many small heronries in Nor-

folk, and occasionally solitary pairs nest on the ground in some inaccessible marsh, instead of in trees as is their wont. One often sees groups of five or six herons together; and once a friend of ours saw twenty in a group,—this was at Haddiscoe one spring, and the cause of such an unusual assemblage was not apparent. The great crested grebe may always be seen, and its soaking wet nest be found. If it has young ones, it dives with them under its wing when alarmed, and old and young are sometimes killed with the same shot. A bird-stuffer told us that a pair of grebes and three young ones, all killed at one shot, were lately brought to him. When one thinks of the fond maternal care so unavailing, one is tempted to be rather hard upon the insatiable collector, and the unholy trade of egging and bird-destroying which ministers to his wants. We must not blame him too much, however, for the chief damage has been done by those who collect the eggs for eating. Almost an incredible number of eggs are gathered for the market; and all eggs which in the least degree resemble plovers' eggs are sold as such. Everywhere, and particularly in Norfolk, there are scientific naturalists whose researches and discoveries are a sufficient justification of the collection of specimens; but there are large numbers of people who take up egg and bird collecting from the same motive which induces people to collect postage-stamps. They seek after acquisition only, and not the furtherance of science; and it is their kind of collecting that true ornithologists would be the first to condemn. The plover and the lapwing are everywhere common. The ruff (the male) and the reeve (the female) of the same species used to be common, but are now rare. Their eggs

used to be gathered to sell as plovers, and the birds were snared for the table. The male in the breeding season has a splendid ruff—like Queen Elizabeth's collar—around his neck; and this he is fond of displaying for the edification of the female, by marching to and fro on any bare hillock, called by fowlers his "hill." Lubbock says he has seen eighteen ruffs on one hill; and when there are so many rivals fights occur, and the gay gallants are scattered. The fowler has laid horse-hair nooses around the base of the "hill," and so the beaten and escaping birds are caught by the leg or the neck. The bittern was formerly common enough, but its nest is now rarely found, and its singular "boom" but seldom heard. In the winter, however, numbers of them come to the Broads with other wild-fowl, and many are shot. We have not space, however, to enumerate the various species of birds which either breed among or annually visit the Broads. Enough has been said to indicate their ornithological richness.

Norfolk was a stronghold of decoys, and there are still as many as six in active operation. Very few persons have actually seen decoys; for as the greatest quietude is necessary in order to give the ducks a sense of security, the presence of visitors is not encouraged at any time, and the greatest mystery and secrecy are observed about a decoy. Briefly speaking, a decoy may be said to be a pond or lake from which shallow creeks or arms branch out like the arms of a star-fish. These arms are curved so that the ends are not visible from the lake, and are arched over with network, forming pipes which lessen in size until at the end there is a kind of removable pocket. No gun is allowed to be fired within the

neighbourhood of the decoy, and the fowl rest there during the day in, as they fancy, unassailable security. But from behind a screen of reeds the decoy-man, who holds in his hand a bit of smouldering turf to prevent his own odour from reaching the birds, gives a low whistle. On the pond are several tame ducks, which know that food is ready for them at the mouth of the pipe, whence the sound proceeds. These swim quietly towards the hidden decoy-man, and are followed by the wild birds. Then a reddish-coloured dog jumps through a hole in the screen, and back again through another. The ducks are immediately brimful of curiosity, and swim to inspect this curious creature. The dog reappears a little way up the pipe, and the ducks follow. When they are well inside, the decoy-man presents himself at the opening, and the frightened crowd flutter into the pocket, and are captured. From one to two thousand birds might be taken in one season. There are two sets of decoys on Fritton Broad — one worked by Lieutenant-Colonel Leathes, and one by Sir Savile Crossley. Those who are interested in the subject of decoys should read an article upon Norfolk decoys, by Mr Southwell, in the *Transactions of the Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society* for 1878-79.

The Broad district is not so rich in wild animals as a drier and more thickly wooded country would be. The only one worth our notice now is the otter, which is very numerous although not often seen, on account of the pathless forests of reeds which afford it ample scope for unseen rambles. Once in an alder-carr a friend of ours came upon three together and shot them all. Frequently, when lying awake at night on board a yacht, we have heard its bell-like bark close by us,

and in the morning have found some large bream lying half eaten on the adjacent "rond." Formerly, as may well be imagined, they were much more abundant; and in the year 1557 the "Norwich Assembly for the fresh-water fishermen between the Tower at Conisford and Hardley Cross" made a regulation, "That every man shall be bound to keep a dog to hunt the otter, and to make a general hunt twice or thrice in the year, or more, at time or times convenient, upon pain to forfeit 10s." And in 1729 we read in the '*Norwich Gazette*' that, between the 18th March and the 20th of May of that year, certain Suffolk gentlemen killed seventeen brace of otters by hunting them. The usual breeding-place of the otter is in some hole beneath tree-roots or rocks on the margin of the water; but as such spots are rare on the Broads, the otter accommodates itself to circumstances, and builds itself a nest in a reed-bed on the ground, raising a hillock of weeds and rubbish as big as a haystack, in the centre of which is a chamber approached by two or more entrances. The otter is often caught in the large bow-nets which the Broad-men set for tench in the "runs" between the weeds. Otter-hunting with dogs in the lower reaches and Broads would be useless, as the extent of water is so great that the otter would have a great advantage over the dogs, and the hunter could not follow dogs and otters into the reed-beds.

Norfolk is particularly rich in lepidoptera. Four-fifths of the species found in England have been met with here. It was the last habitat of the lost large copper butterfly. The magnificent swallow-tail butterfly is still tolerably abundant, particularly on the banks of the Bure; and we have a vivid recollection of the impetuous rush, over dykes and

into the water, of an enthusiastic entomologist who was sailing with us one day near Horning, and saw one of these insects flying over the river.

Of the fish with which these waters are teeming, so much can be said that it is difficult to select that which must go into the small compass at our command. The bream deserves first mention, because of its enormous numbers. It is everywhere, and attains to a large size. Four and five pounds are now not uncommon weights, and one of eleven pounds was recently caught. The Norfolk bream-fisher is *sui generis*. You generally see them two in a boat which is moored parallel with the stream, each man with an apron and a cloth. The bream is covered with such a thick slime that were it not for these precautions the angler's clothes would be irretrievably ruined. Handfuls of brewers' grains are thrown in from time to time as ground-bait, and every swim produces a bite, so that at the end of a good day there may be from five to eight stone weight of bream and roach in the boat. The artisan classes of Norwich are great bream and roach fishers, and frequently have fishing contests, — generally under the patronage of Saint Monday. On such noisy and festive occasions, however, the sport is generally comparatively poor. The bream is not a very toothsome fish to eat, but large quantities are sold by the professional fishermen to the poorer Jews in our large towns for use on fast-days, of course at a very cheap rate; and many bushels are sold to the fishermen on the coast for use as bait.

Of the large quantities caught by the angler few are eaten. After the catch is weighed it is cast away, and one often sees rotting heaps of fish on the banks. Tons have been

used as manure, but these were the produce of an infamous system of poaching which prevailed before the passing of the Norfolk and Suffolk Fresh Water Fisheries Act in 1877. The poachers dragged the rivers with small-meshed nets, and even trawled up them just as is done at sea; and as many as eight tons of fish would be the produce of a day's or night's netting. When the price obtained for these would not pay for the carriage, they were simply thrown away. Now, however, there are regulations as to netting, which have put a stop to this, and the fisheries are fast becoming better than they have been for a long time. There is no restriction against rod-fishing at any time of the year in the free waters, which comprise the three rivers, — Wroxham, Oulton, Fritton, and Ormesby Broads, and Breydon Water.

The roach almost equals the bream in point of numbers, and is caught of a uniform large size. The rudd, or roud, as it is generally called in Norfolk, is very abundant, more particularly in the Broads. It is a brilliant-coloured active fish, and will rise at the fly, so that a day's roud-fishing is a most enjoyable experience. The carp is not common, but grows to a large size. Mr Lubbock mentions one which was caught in Belaugh Broad of the weight of 15½ lb. Perch are numerous and large. Four-pounders are frequently taken; and on the Waveney a barber of Beccles took in a short space of time one morning eleven perch, each 2 lb. in weight, and no small ones. The fresh-water shrimp is the favourite bait for them.

The tench is common and large. It is not often caught by the angler, because the bream and roach will rush off with the bait while the tench is deliberating about it; but they are caught in great num-

bers by means of the bow-net. A bow-net set just below the town of Beccles had sixteen brace of fine tench in it when taken up. The attraction in this case was a bright-coloured bunch of flowers fastened inside. Great numbers, however, are taken in a very peculiar way. In the hot days the tench lie on the surface of the water in shoals. On the approach of the Broad-man in his boat they disperse, but only for a few yards, until they can hide themselves in the weeds in some shallow spot. The man notes where some of the fish go, and, paddling quietly up, he bares his arm and feels for them. Unless the fish is touched on the tail it will not move until it is lifted right into the boat; and in this manner five or six dozen fish, over fourteen inches in length, may be taken in a day.

The eel and the pike are, however, the chief "paying" fish in these waters. The eel is the support of numbers of fishermen, who "bob" for it with bundles of worms threaded on worsted, in which the eels' teeth get entangled; spear it in the dykes and along the shallow margins; set eel-pots; and net it in a variety of ways. On the Bure, large nets are set across the river during the autumn nights to catch the eels making their annual migration to the sea. Immense catches are made on dark and stormy nights, when the eels are most on the move. Some of the eels are sold in Norwich and Yarmouth, but the greater number go to Birmingham and the Black Country, where such rich food is apparently much appreciated. Long night-lines with hundreds of hooks upon them, baited with small fish, used also to be set; but the recent Act made this illegal, because pike and other fish were often caught on them. The poachers trawling up the Waveney have taken ninety

stone of eels in a week, although eels are the most difficult fish of any to be caught with a drag-net. After the last summer floods the eels were greatly on the move; and the men who sat and "bobbed" just below Norwich would get four or five stone weight in a single night, which would sell for ten shillings a stone.

The pike is the monarch of the Norfolk waters, and at one time was supremely abundant, but the natives harried him to their utmost. Liggers or trimmers made of bundles of rushes were set by the hundred. The smaller Broad was hired by fishermen who, to make a livelihood out of them, caught all they could. Yarrell, in his 'British Fishes,' gives an instance of a few days' slaughter of the pike on Heigham Sound. Mr Lubbock instances ninety pike, many of them of large size, being taken on Ranworth Broad by two amateur fishermen in the same boat in one day. Lately, on Scoulton Mere, twenty-three were taken by trimmers, five of them weighing over 20 lb. apiece. Nets and set-lines and snaring in the dykes at spawning-time thinned their numbers, so that both in quantity and size pike were slowly but surely decreasing. Since the Act was passed, however, there is a great improvement in the pike-fishing. Only the other week, one of forty-three inches in length and 27 lb. in weight was caught at Cantley, on the Yare.

In Oulton Broad are great numbers of the grey mullet, which, however, will not take any bait that the angler can offer them.

In the spring the smelt comes up the Yare to spawn, and is stopped in its course by the New Mills, which are built right across the river, in the city of Norwich. Just below the mills, in the heart of the city, the smelter passes the

night in his boat, throwing a huge casting-net, by the light of a torch, and occasionally making large catches. Lubbock says: "It is a curious fact that other fish greatly forsake the higher part of the river whilst it is occupied by the smelt spawning. Roach and dace are at that time very scarce, although plentiful enough before the smelts arrive; they then remove further down the river for a time; and, as they say here, 'the fish are down because the smelts are up.'"

There is a large and constant traffic on these waters carried on by means of wherries. These are sailing craft of from 20 to 70 tons burthen. They are long and shallow, have one tall mast and a huge sail, the rig being on the principle of that known as the Una rig, except that there is no boom. Two men, or a man and a boy, or his wife, or even one man only, suffice to navigate these large craft. They sail fast, very close to the wind, and are handy. There is a little cabin in the stern, and abaft of this the steersman stands against the tiller, with the sheet working on a "horse" on the top of the cabin just in front of him. The mast moves on a fulcrum, and the lower end is weighted, so that by means of the forestay one man can easily lower and raise it. When the wind fails, the men betake themselves to the "quant," which is a long slender pole with a knob at one end and a spike and shoulder at the other. The shoulder is to prevent the quant sinking too far into the mud. The wherryman plunges the quant into the water at the bow of his craft, and placing the knob against his shoulder walks aft along the plankways pushing with all his might. Many an amateur yachtsman has found this part of the business easy enough; but when trying to withdraw the quant, he has discovered

it to be so deeply imbedded in the mud that he has failed to extract it, and after a last agonising pull has either let it go altogether, or, if his sense of duty was too strong, has stuck to it until his craft has slipped from under him and he has had a good sousing. The quant must always be laid with its point towards the stern, and the boathook with its point towards the bows, otherwise bad luck will attend the voyage. The men are paid by the voyage; so that a fair wind means money—a head wind, less money—and a calm, loss. Owing to the winding course of the river there are always some reaches which can be sailed without tacking. The men will often lose an hour or two of a fair wind or tide in order to wait for and race a rival wherry; and at the various regattas there is frequently a wherry-race which produces much noise, fun, and excitement. In the winter a wherryman's life is a very hard one, but there is but little actual peril; they are such splendid steersmen that accidents rarely happen. They stick in the mud occasionally, but this simply means a little extra pushing. Occasionally a "rodges-blast" sweeps like a whirlwind over the marshes, lifting the reed-stacks, wrecking windmills, and dismasting the wherries; but this is not of frequent occurrence. We have failed to trace the etymology of this local name for a rotatory wind-squall. There are a large number of men employed in this kind of navigation, and as a rule they are sober, honest, and civil men, ready to give any assistance in their power to the yachtsman. A great weakness of theirs is a fondness for tea. This they boil in the kettle which they never "furs." The wherries are built entirely of English oak, and a large one will cost about £500.

It may well be imagined that

yachting and boat-sailing is a favourite amusement on these waters. The pleasure-craft in general use is a boat of from 6 to 10 tons, with a roomy cabin, in which two or three persons can sleep comfortably, and with a fore-castle which will accommodate one or two men. A two or three weeks' cruise in one of these boats is a most pleasant way of spending a holiday, and one very often resorted to. There are always plenty of yachts to be had on hire at a moderate sum per week, and we can most strongly recommend this mode of seeing the Broads. Indeed it is the only way of doing them thoroughly, as it would not do to depend upon obtaining inn accommodation and a boat at many of these out-of-the-way spots. There are two flourishing yacht clubs; and their regattas, at short intervals, make one or other of the Broads or river-reaches gay with white sails and many-coloured flags. The usual rig of these yachts is the sloop, consisting of a mainsail and large jib; and they are uncommonly handy. Formerly, the fashionable rig was the lateen, and many of these old craft are still in existence. The great wing-shaped foresail is picturesque, but the immense yard is awkward to handle, and the rig has gone out of fashion.

The marshes often present a curious sight. If the spectator is on the same level scarcely any water may be visible, and the expanse of marsh may seem continuous; yet here and there and everywhere are the sails of yachts and wherries gliding through it, their hulls invisible.

One constantly sees, generally moored in some creek, a large rough boat with a hut built upon it. These are the abodes of men who live by catching eels and other fish, and spend all the year round on the water. The lives of these

men are much the same as those of the "Broad-men," described by Mr Lubbock.

"When I first visited the Broads, I found here and there an occupant 'squatted down,' as the Americans would call it, on the verge of a pool, who relied almost entirely on shooting and fishing for the support of his family, and lived in a truly primitive manner. I particularly remember one hero of this description. 'Our Broad,' as he always called the extensive pool by which his cottage stood, was his microcosm, his world—the islands in it were his gardens of the Hesperides, its opposite extremity his *ultima Thule*. Wherever his thoughts wandered, they could not get beyond the circle of his beloved lake; indeed I never knew them aberrant but once, when he informed me, with a doubting air, that he had sent his wife and his two eldest children to a fair, at a country village two miles off, that their ideas might expand by travel: as he sagely observed, they had never been away from 'our Broad.' I went into his house at the dinner-hour, and found the whole party going to fall to, most thankfully, upon a roasted herring-gull, killed, of course, on 'our Broad.' His life presented no vicissitudes but an alternation of marsh employment. In winter, after his day's reed-cutting, he might be found posted at night-fall waiting for the flight of fowl, or paddling after them on the open water. With the first warm days of February he launched his fleet of trimmers; pike finding a ready sale at his own door to those who bought them to sell again in the Norwich market. As soon as the pike had spawned and were out of season, the eels began to occupy his attention, and lapwings' eggs to be diligently sought for.

"In the end of April the island in his watery domain was frequently visited for the sake of shooting the ruffs which resorted thither on their first arrival. As the days grew longer and hotter, he might be found searching in some smaller pools near his house for the shoals of tench as they commenced spawning. Yet a little longer he began marsh-mowing—his gun always

laid ready upon his coat, in case flappers should be met with. By the middle of August teal came to a wet corner near his cottage, snipes began to arrive, and he was often called up to exercise his vocal powers on the curlews that passed to and fro. By the end of September good snipe-shooting was generally to be met with in his neighbourhood; and his accurate knowledge of the marshes, his unassuming good-humour, and zeal in providing sport for those who employed him, made him very much sought after as a sporting guide by snipe-shots and fishermen; and his knowledge of the habits of different birds enabled him to give useful information to those who collected them."

The older men have many yarns to tell of the gigantic pike and eels, and great catches of their younger days, with sometimes a spice of adventure, as the following tale will show. The men from the Yare and the Waveney having well harried their own waters, used to go up the Bure, and their depredations with nets and set-lines stirred up the wrath of the men of the Bure. There was then no remedy save that of force, so the natives banded together to expel the intruders. Our informant and his mate were engaged one dark night near Ranworth in setting eel-lines, when they heard the sound of muffled oars up the stream. They listened and watched, and at last became aware that at least half-a-dozen boats were creeping down in search of them. They took to their oars, and then the chase developed itself into a hot and eager one; both parties pulling their lustiest, the one to inflict, and the other to escape, rough punishment. The pursued were nearly caught, when they opened up a reach, down which there blew a fair strong wind, and hoisting their lugsail they slipped away, and gained such a lead that the pursuers gave up the chase.

Notwithstanding that there is so much marsh the climate is not unhealthy. There is, owing to the improved drainage, a constant though slight movement of the water everywhere, so that it does not form the foul stagnant puddles that it formerly did. There is always plenty of wind, and often a salt air from the sea, so that the marshes and lakes are well purified. At Somerleyton, near Lowestoft, there has been found an exceptional quantity of ozone. The matter may have been different when the puddles and pools in the marsh dried and festered, and the dead fish putrefied, causing bubbles of foul air to arise and sometimes ignite in a blue flickering flame. Many years ago Will-o'-the-wisps were common enough, and the wherry-men have even lit pieces of paper at the uncertain flame. The last time at which we have satisfactory evidence of a Will-o'-the-wisp being seen was twenty years ago. The marshes are sweet and pure enough now.

Mention has been made of reed-cutting. This is the "Fen folk's harvest," and one purpose to which the reeds are put is to be used instead of laths for the formation of ceilings and "lath and plaster" partitions.

Among the Broads the shooter and the angler will find abundant sport, the naturalist full occupation, the yacht sailor opportunities such as no other part of England presents, the artist colour and effect, and, lastly, there are subjects enough for the antiquarian to ponder over. Wherever one looks there are churches—there are 740 in the county. Three or four spires may be seen from every coign of vantage.

St Benedict's Abbey, on the banks of the Bure, presents some interesting ruins. Burgh Castle at the

head of Breydon Water, is a spacious fort of Roman origin. The wall and towers on three sides of it are very perfect. The semi-Dutch town of Yarmouth, with its singular narrow streets, or "rows," is worth a day's peregrination. And Caister Castle, three and a half

miles from Yarmouth, is a picturesque ruin.

In winter when the flooded marshes and the Broad's are frozen, the skater will have ample elbow-room, and the naturalist and sportsman may penetrate into the very fastnesses of the wild-fowl.

A LIBERAL ADDRESS.

1.

We haven't got a policy,
And do not care about one;
The party must, from all I see,
At present do without one.
As long as Harcourt finds us wit,
And Chamberlain abuse, sir,
We have, if you consider it,
For principle no use, sir.

2.

That war a sort of murder is
Was always my opinion;
And nothing, sure, absurder is
Than wars to get dominion.
The very name of Empire must
Raise every good man's bile, sir—
At all events of all, I trust,
Who flourish in this isle, sir.

3.

For Earls the cry of glory is,
No doubt, a clever dodge, sir;
But tell me if the story is
The same for honest Hodge, sir.
For Glory's gilded partisans
May flaunt it as they will, sir,
Poor ploughmen and plain artisans
Must always pay the bill, sir.

4.

The flames of burning villages !
The robberies, rapes, and slaughters !
The homes the soldier pillages !
The orphan sons and daughters !
The wails of widows without end !
The pressure of taxation !
And not a penny left to spend
On art and education !

5.

And all to turn the mind of men
From changes that must come, sir ;
To keep the common kind of men
A little longer dumb, sir ;
Lest thinking in their honest way
About the men who rule, sir,
The simple folk should find that they
Are " imbeciles and fools," sir.

6.

Can phrases veil such scenes as these ?
Can aught excuse such acts, sir ?
Keep words for those whom words can please,
I take my stand on facts, sir.
I care not what the reason is,—
Pride, policy, or pelf, sir,—
War, horrid war, a treason is
'Gainst Reason's very self, sir.

7.

And therefore when an Emperor
His neighbour did attack, sir,
I did not lose my temper, or
E'en ask him to draw back, sir.
Of virtue and humanity
I wept to hear him rant, sir ;
For with my Christianity
I like a little cant, sir.

8.

My conduct if you wonder at,
And what my reasons are, sir,
That what at home I thunder at
I worship in the Czar, sir.
A despot with a power like his
Attracts my Liberalism, sir,
Besides, the real danger is
Disraeli's despotism, sir.

9.

The Indian troops from India brought,
And back to India sent, sir ;
In darkest secret this was wrought,
Against our freedom meant, sir.
I did not like it first of all,
Yet I had minded less, sir—
But what annoyed me worst of all,
I felt 'twas a success, sir.

10.

In short, if aught is plain, 'tis this—
That there are moments when, sir,
The question not of measures is,
The question is of men, sir.
We haven't settled what to do,
We'll tell you when we win, sir :
At present all you've got to do
Is just to put us in, sir.

11.

For, sure, that Tweedledee should reign,
Is ruin and disgrace, sir ;
While England's path is always plain
With Tweedledum in place, sir.
And matters to this point have come,—
'Twere better far to be, sir,
Quite in the wrong with Tweedledum,
Than right with Tweedledee, sir.

POLITICAL RABIES.

FIERCE hatred is never bestowed on mediocrity. Unmeasured invective is not the language of power. Showers of nicknames and strong adjectives are, generally speaking, indications of weakness rather than of strength. If these things be true of ordinary, they are doubly so of political, life. When language that could not be used in respectable society without the speaker forfeiting his claim to belong to it is freely scattered about from platforms and applauded to the echo—when men of repute and position in the State are spoken of as mountebanks and masqueraders, called “immoral” and “outrageously wicked,” those who approve their doings being denounced as “abettors of fraud and crime,” or dubbed “fools and imbeciles,” and the press accused of “baseness” in supporting them—two things are evident; first, that the kind of demoralisation is at work which is never the outcome of conscious strength—and, second, that the object of its fury is not of a low order. These things are the more manifest if such words that “defile a man” come not out of the mouths of inexperienced and parochial politicians, nor are spoken in the ears of irresponsible people, but pour forth freely from the lips of men old and eminent in the public service, and are heard unrebuked by others equally distinguished, whose position and training restrain them from personally giving utterance to vulgar and unreasoning abuse. Still more is it manifest when the matters in question are not of mean or parochial interest, but relate to world-weighty affairs and involve most momentous issues.

Every one who has observed the

tone of Liberal meetings during this autumn knows that Great Britain has been, from week to week, ringing with political jeremiads of this description. The language of passion the most ungoverned finds utterance from the lips of aged and experienced politicians. Nor does the boiling torrent appear to expend itself quickly, as uncontrolled passion usually does. The flow is uniform in quantity and quality. The stream, swollen now from one spout now from another, careers on in unvarying turbidity. Her Majesty's Ministers are continuously assailed in a style recalling the worst days of Walpole and Bolingbroke, who lived in a century when rough language was less offensive to the refinement of society than now; and words which would bring down instant censure if uttered from the Opposition benches, are daily heard on platforms covered with socially respectable people. Votaries of temperance use language which shows it to be possible to be very intemperate without swallowing alcohol; and preachers of peace vie with one another in showing how violent people can be without using swords or bullets. Ex-Ministers of a party which boasted that it had the honour of removing the parliamentary disabilities of Jews, are not ashamed to flourish, as an argument against a great man, that his origin is Jewish. Ex-Under-secretaries think it decent to draw Radical cheers by speaking of statesmen returning from a European conference as “Mephistopheles and Faust;” or to brand men whom formerly they professed to admire and respect as guilty of “robbery, spoliation,” and even of murder. It

is best to quote, that there may be no mistake as to the seriousness of the words :—

"The blood that has been shed has been as really shed by Lord Salisbury as if he had slain with his own hand the unhappy men who have been massacred."

There is no doubt that, in ordinary circumstances, those who use strong language in speaking of public men may, to a certain extent, justify themselves, if they are able to convince the listener that the objects of their anger have indeed betrayed their trust and outraged the sense of right of the community. Words of indignation and invective may be the just reward of deeds in a grave degree censurable. This, indeed, is the excuse made for the present rabid style of Liberal platform declamation. But when impartial history records its judgment on the vacation utterances of the Hartington-Bright opposition, it is certain that any such excuse will be held inadmissible. And this for the twofold reason, that the indignation is not shared by those who are the lookers-on at the fight, and that it in every respect lacks the tone and dignity which the importance of the issues and the matter of the accusations demand. It is not European criticism, but Liberal cliques in Great Britain, by whom the policy of the Government is impeached as wicked and condemned as suicidal; and the language used is not that of patriotic indignation, but of petty disappointment and spite. While foreign nations confess—some with satisfaction and others with chagrin—that the power of Great Britain is once more an important factor in the world's affairs, it is Englishmen, and Englishmen only, who profess to see in the conduct of affairs which has produced this impression abroad, something to the discredit of the Government

of their own country. These Englishmen, too, represent the crisis as most grave and critical. The words "impending ruin," "national disgrace," "breach of the constitution," are used from day to day in speaking of the acts of her Majesty's Ministers. Great men join in the tone of exalted alarm. Lord Hartington introduces Mr Bright, and says, "I am quite content to leave in his hands the defence of our cause;" and that gentleman, like some great denunciatory prophet of olden days, gravely tells the thousands in Pomona Gardens, that if the present Government is not cast out, there is nothing for the men of Manchester but to flee from the doomed city, and, with their children and their household gods, to seek the blessed United States—a land which, he thanks Providence, has not yet produced a Beaconsfield or a Salisbury. It is impossible, when reading such wild unreasoning utterances as these, not to recall to mind how similar were the words used in former times. Fox spoke of the younger Pitt and his colleagues as seeming

"Determined to push Great Britain to the verge of ruin."

Speaking of the Chatham administration — one so successful that, as has been truly said, opposite parties have pointed to it with applause, eager to claim its principles as their own—Lord Chesterfield moaned,—

"I am sure we are undone both at home and abroad; at home, by our increasing debt and expenses—abroad, by our ill-luck and incapacity. We are no longer a nation. I never yet saw so dreadful a prospect."

Horace Walpole declared,—

"It is time for England to slip her cables and float away into some unknown ocean."

The only difference between such utterances and those of Liberal

statesmen of our day is that, in the old ones, invective never becomes mere unreasoning vituperation. It is by men's tone, and not by the mere sense of their words, that their position and motives must be judged. Professions of belief in the gravity of a national crisis are easily made. Self-persuasion of their sincerity is not difficult. But if their secret spring be pure and patriotic, its outflow must of necessity be dignified and impressive.

"Passion is reason, when it speaks from right."

But if it do so speak, though its language will certainly be strong, it will not be low-toned. Its weapons may be wielded vigorously, and may cut keenly, but they will never be dipped in venom. Honest national indignation will deprecate, as a weakening of its cause, all resort to vulgar and vituperative invective. When the heart of the people is truly roused, its indignation will not seek in the dirt for expression, but will rise high above the mean modes of factious attack and personal abuse. In ordinary times, when no great issues agitate the public mind, Earl Stanhope's remark, in his '*History of England*,' may be accepted as true:

"How sure a road to popularity has it always been, to tell us that we are the most wretched and ill-governed people upon the face of the earth!"

Constant criticism of rulers and their daily doings in the State is like dropping water. What it falls on is in the end worn away. But when the question is one of the nation's position and the future of the world, public spirit will find utterance expressive of its strength in worthy and weighty words; faction, in its weakness, will make more blatant use of its customary style. Any one who has observed

the language and tone of recent Liberal speeches can form his own opinion which condition they are exponents of. It would be difficult to imagine what words the vocabulary can supply for faction, what tone can be held contrary to decorum, if the Liberal utterances of this recess speak the language and display the style of truth and soberness. When a Prince of Wales in the middle of the last century said to Dr Doddington, who was one of his Opposition leaders,

"It is right to talk and throw things out to expose the Ministry,"

Doddington replied—

"Yes, sir, I suppose talk may be right; but people should consider what talk."

It is very plain that there is no Bubb Doddington in the present Opposition.

But whatever may be the originating cause of the violence and vulgarity that have been so freely expended on her Majesty's Government, the protracted nature of the eruption is remarkable. As a rule, fury that finds vent in spleeney speeches, wears itself out. The excited mind is relieved by pouring forth its complaints, and resentment becomes exhausted by its very violence. But of those results there is no sign at present. The shout of faction is as loud as ever—the lungs of the party seem leathern indeed. A Government which has again and again received the support of a considerable proportion of their own party, swelling its majority almost beyond precedent, is by Liberal orators still denounced as detestable, and vilified as wicked. Let two ex-Ministers, one of the Upper, the other of the Lower House of Parliament, speak for themselves. The Duke of Argyll, on the 15th of last month, after uttering a long harangue in which

the word "gross" occurs half-a-dozen times in a dozen sentences, finishes off with the words "all these crimes," as applied to the acts of the Government. On the 4th of last month Mr Lowe thought it decent to use these words:—

"What they [the Government] want is to stay in office by appealing to the worst passions and lowest feelings of human nature. . . . A Government whose conduct has been so flagrant that no honest people can think of them without shame and degradation."

It may be difficult to guess where such speakers can find "shame" for themselves, far less for all honest people. As to "degradation," it may not be surprising that Mr Lowe and his friends should feel a sense of it; and they are heartily welcome to indulge the conceit that any sense of it they may have arises from the conduct of other people.

A much more interesting study than the shame and degradation of all the honest people Mr Lowe has ever known, is an inquiry into the causes which have led Liberals, great and small,

"To quit the path of honest sense
For a dear ramble through impertinence."

The reign of Billingsgate is manifestly the outcome of one or other of two states of things. Either the position being assailed is so strong that steady and honourable assault is found unavailing, or demoralisation and internal disintegration have reduced the attacking force from an army advancing with a united front, under generals who inspire confidence and maintain discipline, to a disorganised rabble, who must be excited through their passions before they can be trusted for the fight. There is indeed another alternative to be set against these. It may be that the present state of matters has resulted from combination of both of them.

The Liberal parties may make their selection; but it will be found difficult by those who now look on, or by the future historian, to trace any distinction of depth in the shade of dishonour that will rest on the Opposition of 1879, to whatever alternative opinion may lean.

It is manifest that the Liberals cannot admit the party opposed to them to be strong. In 1868 Liberalism was singing her song of victory over the final fall of the Conservative party. Six years ago, when that party succeeded in returning to power with a parliamentary majority such as it had not obtained for a quarter of a century, the Liberal cry was of necessity changed. The reaction, which could not be denied, had to be ascribed to some temporary and evanescent cause. The assurance was given by leaders of Liberal opinion that a rapid decadence of the new Ministry was to be looked for,—that it would "encounter troubles and perils which must immediately weaken and soon destroy it." The taunt was thrown out that the Conservative party could only remain in power by following the policy of the Liberals. In Mr Bright's terse language it was prophesied,—

"The party which has triumphed must march in its [the Liberal] path."

Mr Gladstone, in language less terse, but equally positive, asserted,—

"What is this Conservative reaction, if it exists? It is not the representative of any healthy, vigorous, and powerful patriotic action in some other direction. It is mere weariness; it is mere lassitude; it is mere loss of energy."

Six sessions have passed since these views were expressed by the leaders, these statements applauded by the rank and file of the Liberal party. For two or three years after they were uttered it was possible for

Liberals to confess that Conservatism was temporarily strong; but when sufficient time had elapsed to test the accuracy of the prophecies, the line of assertion had to be changed. When it was found that, time after time, unprecedented majorities were recorded in favour of Conservative policy, notwithstanding the utmost efforts of eloquence and rhetorical skill; when actions denounced as "wicked, criminally foolish and suicidal," were stamped with approval in the House of Commons by numbers on all occasions far exceeding the working strength of the Government,—the leaders (or rather the leading spirits) of Liberalism saw that if they waited longer for any fulfilment of the prophecies of 1874 that could be discerned by ordinary minds they would probably wait in vain. They were in this dilemma, that they must either confess the Liberal oracles to have spoken foolishly, or boldly assert that their utterances were in fact fulfilled, whether it appeared to be so or not. To make the confession, though true, was too much for the pride of Liberal infallibility, and would have been dangerous to party cohesion, already sadly weakened from within. As a demoralised army melts away before a strong and resolute opposing force, so the Liberal party, with all its internal divisions and quarrels,—its aristocratic Whiggery at the top, and its Republican and Home Rule extremities—its Ritualists and enthusiastic religious dissenters—its evangelicals and positivists,—can never be held together and made amenable to discipline in Opposition, unless its leaders keep up the promise of early victory. Nostrum-mongers have no appreciation of the duty of Opposition, and no sense of loyalty to the chiefs of their party, unless they are, or can be made to believe that they are, in

fact, continuously progressing on the road to success and power. Let their responsible heads but hint that a halt should be made and attack postponed, and instantly a dozen self-constituted leaders will start up to insult and defy them. Patriotic opposition, which will not embarrass a Government during diplomatic crises, has its position made humiliating, and unpatriotic opposition becomes irritable and restive. The truth is, that what is called the Liberal party, whether in power or in Opposition, resembles a pack of wolves, united when following their prey, but ready to rush at and devour one another if no other mode of satisfying their hunger presents itself. The pack must have something given to it on which all will fasten, otherwise the more violent section will turn to destroy the rest. That it has this tendency to be self-destructive, unless led on to attack something outside itself, is a natural result of its constitution. It is the principle of the party that the will of majorities, no matter of what composed, is the expression of right. Revolutionary secularists, avowed enemies of all religion, and bitter opponents of the Christian faith, are enrolled in the Liberal party alongside of High Church Ritualists and Low Church Evangelicals, and welcomed as aids to so-called movements for religious equality, which take effect in attacks on Churches, whose good work cannot be gainsaid, and whose zeal in the cause of Christianity is universally confessed. Men whose principles are directly subversive of the constitution of the country, are admitted into the ranks of a great party in the State, because their votes will aid it to obtain the reins of power. The Liberal party is unlike the net of the parable, out of which the bad were cast away. The Liberal net gathers in all—the

clean and the unclean. Quantity is everything, quality nothing.

Then, again, it is quite well known to every man of position in the Liberal party that there is a large section of it which is resolutely determined to bring about a practical disintegration of the United Kingdom, and do all in its power to obstruct the business of Parliament in order to effect this purpose. Yet Liberal leaders cannot resolutely join in putting these men down. They know that, without the Home Rule vote, they have no chance whatever of a return to anything but the semblance of power within half a generation, and therefore they cannot join in firm action to protect Parliament from insult, and public business from being brought to a standstill. An honest, independent member like Professor Fawcett may speak out manfully; but the front Opposition bench must move softly, and Mr Gladstone's pen be wielded to excuse and palliate.

Thus the responsible chiefs of the Liberal organisation count among their supporters men whose political sentiments they abhor, as an unprincipled or selfish man marries an odiously vulgar or notoriously fast woman, that he may profit by her fortune. Indeed, the action of the politician is the more debased of the two. The man who weds unsuitably has at least the position of recognised authority, and the chance of effecting some improvement in the being he allies himself with. But the party leaders, who include among their rank and file demagogues, infidels, and plotters of treason, can indulge no such hope. It is not in their power to exercise any effective authority. They can have no ground for expecting any improvement, and must inevitably fall either into that most humiliating position in which men

nominally lead, but are, in fact, compelled to follow; or, if they venture to attempt to shake themselves free from the consequences of the alliance, are sure to be made to feel the false position in which they have placed themselves, by being subjected to opprobrium, and even to rudeness.

That this is no fanciful description of the Liberal position, reference to a few facts which are beyond dispute may suffice to show. Who can forget that Lord Hartington, and the responsible ex-Ministers whom he leads, have been hooted by those sitting below them on the Opposition benches, because they once left the House, refusing to join in a factious vote against the Ministry? Has not division after division been taken on great public questions of foreign policy, regardless of the opinion of the recognised Opposition leader, and to the disgust of great part of his followers? Has the spectacle not been witnessed over and over again of an ex-Prime Minister, professing to be no longer a leader, making one of miserable minorities on matters already disposed off by votes of full Houses, thus openly and emphatically expressing his disapproval of the moderation of the nominal leader? Did not that nominal leader again and again record his vote on one side of a most important public question, bringing down upon himself, from an influential Radical, the accusation that he had ceased to be the leader of the Opposition? And did not that same statesman, as his only reply to the taunt, condescend to change his ground, and propose a resolution directly contrary to all his previous votes, and thereby succeed, apparently, in rehabilitating himself as the leader in the estimation of those who had insulted him? And have not the lesser lights imitated the example of the greater? Has not Mr Je-

kings vilified Sir William Vernon Harcourt, and the latter eaten the leek, if not humbly (which is scarcely to be conceived), at least bravely? Is not Mr Adam made to feel that the Liberal pack is terribly "scratch," and compelled to change his note on the horn from day to day? The rod of discipline of the Liberals is wielded mercilessly by those whose place is low; while the occupants of the benches where rule is supposed to reside, kiss it with at least the appearance of cheerful submission. Never were the centrifugal forces in the Liberal party so dominant as now. Chaos reigns when leaders lead. It is only when leaders follow that there is a semblance of cohesion.

Those who believe that they have the command of this strangely constituted force called the Liberal party, have therefore been driven by stern necessity to act as if one of their prophecies had been verified. It was impossible to attempt to maintain that the Conservative party, if still strong, was so because Mr Bright's assertion that it must march in the Liberal path had proved true. The unmeasured strong-worded criticism of a thousand platforms had made that argument unstatable. A Government that has done nothing good, and left undone all good that it was in its power to do; that has been restless, aggressive, imperious, blustering, swaggering, lustful of territory, eager for war, an enemy to freedom, a supporter of bad government, deceitful, unjust, wicked, criminal, and a hundred other evil things,—cannot be said by Liberals to have followed their path in its foreign policy. A Government which has effected no good thing in domestic affairs; has disestablished no Churches; has passed no Irish Land Acts,—has surely in its home policy not gone in the path of Liberalism.

Nor has it followed that path with its parliamentary majority in the somewhat original manner which has been suggested for imitation by a distinguished member of the last Liberal Cabinet. Mr Goschen has lately informed the world that those who follow the Liberal path should bring in measures which will dissipate their majority,—that an evidence of the excellence of Liberal work may be found in the number of seats lost to the Liberal party in consequence of its performance. In this mode of following the path it is impossible to say that the Conservatives have gone. Nor is it quite easy to believe that Mr Goschen, if his party could succeed in winning over a sufficient number of constituencies at the next election to oust the Conservatives from power, would be consistent enough to attribute the present Government's loss of seats to the excellence of its labours.

It is thus from every point of view evident that Liberals cannot explain away Conservative strength by asserting that it is due to Liberal lines being followed, and must therefore elect to stand or fall by the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of its other prophecy. They must risk all on the assertion that the country is again Liberal; that the "lassitude" and "loss of energy," of which Mr Gladstone spoke in 1874, has been shaken off; and that the "great Liberal party" is prepared once more to stand forth in irresistible strength with a new majority, to be dissipated *à la* Goschen, in following the Liberal path.

It has accordingly become the fashion among Liberal orators to cast obloquy upon the present House of Commons; to assert that it does not represent the national will; and that although it has again and again emphatically upheld the

policy of the Government, this has been done in defiance of public opinion. The assertion is a bold one, in face of the known facts. It has occasionally occurred in parliamentary history, that a decision of the House of Commons on some point of national importance has been practically reversed at the polling-booth. It is also true that, near the close of the life of a Parliament, the Government majority may have ceased to represent the national mind. If it were not so, a Cabinet with a working majority would practically have a permanent hold of office. But when the circumstances are such as at present, more than common courage is required to enable opponents of the Government to speak for the country as they have done during the last two years and more. A Government which is challenged on its foreign policy, having held office during a time when international questions of magnitude imperatively presented themselves for decision, might well be supposed not to represent public opinion, if the votes given to it fell below, or even if they only equalled, the nominal strength of their party in Parliament. An Opposition united and unanimous on such questions soon becomes entitled to demand an appeal to the country, and is almost certain to have its appeal sustained. For it is on questions of foreign policy that moderate men of every party withhold opposition, until it can be withheld no longer. Patriotic politicians feel it to be so essential that the Executive should be supported, in dealing with affairs abroad, that in opposition, though they criticise freely, they negative with reluctance. Therefore, when a Ministry is found dependent on a bare working majority for support of its action abroad, there is always ground for believing that the policy

is open to serious challenge. But what is the state of the facts in the present case? No Government has had its policy subjected to so many test divisions. Yet in every instance of challenge it has been supported by a majority which may be truly characterised as overwhelming. And this not in the face of a languid opposition, but after very full and repeated debates, in which the best orators of the day have vied with one another in the vigour of their attacks. It is boasted by the Liberals—and possibly not without ground—that the Opposition benches in the House of Commons are at present stronger than the official in debating and oratorical ability. The superiority, however, has availed them nothing. Her Majesty's Government, though labouring under this disadvantage, has secured so much support from the ranks of the enemy, that the normal majority for Ministers has always been more than doubled, and frequently tripled and quadrupled. The eloquence and fervour of Mr Gladstone, the vehement diatribes of Mr Bright, and the laboured witticisms of "Wild Oats" Harcourt, have been poured forth in torrents, yet no impression has been made. Moderate men have had the courage to support a "wicked, blustering, swaggering, fraudulent" policy, till ex-Ministerial rage becomes so blind that it seems determined finally to drive them from their old party by denouncing them as "fools and imbeciles." Lord Hartington, who is "content to leave" this kind of argument in the abler hands of Mr Bright, can find no better way of getting rid of the fact that many moderate Liberals are opposed to his and his Radical colleagues' action during recent years, than by saying he does not know who they are:—

"I have yet to learn that there is anything in the foreign policy which is professed by the Opposition which is especially repugnant to the feelings of moderate Liberals; but certainly if these feelings are entertained by them, let us hear it from some accredited source."

It might be asked very pertinently, What is the "policy professed by the Opposition"? But passing that by, does it never occur to Lord Hartington that a glance at the division-lists of the last three years might assist him to many "accredited sources"? Was the Government majority swelled to hundreds by phantom votes? Does he not recognise that to good Liberals it must be a sad duty to vote against their leaders, and that sadness and silence are natural companions? Has he become so accustomed to be declaimed against and insulted by the Chamberlains and the Jenkinases whenever he declines to be driven by them, that he expects the same treatment from supporters who put patriotism and principle above party? Lord Hartington and Mr Bright—the ill-assorted couple of Manchester—will struggle in vain to get rid of the fact that many Liberals refuse to join their inconsistent and virulent attacks on our foreign policy, either by insulting or ignoring them. It is for these Liberal leaders to reflect, when abated excitement makes sober reflection possible, whether either mode of treatment is likely to increase the chance of those of their own party who are now opposed to them being induced to join in an attempt to turn out the present Government, and place a Cabinet in power in which Lord Hartington and Mr Bright will occupy prominent places. And if Lord Hartington really wishes to know why his opponents in his own party are silent, he may per-

haps find the explanation in what Mr Grenville wrote in somewhat similar circumstances in 1788:—

"You must often have observed, that of all impressions the most difficult to be removed are those which have no reason whatever to support them, because against them no reasoning can be applied."

Moderate Liberals may have this ground for not attempting to convince Lord Hartington of his folly in truckling to Radical tastes and tempers, that no reasoning can be expected to convince him, if he does not yet see the rocks ahead of his present course. When the pilot has already got close to the reefs, it is too late to speak to him of the danger of the course he is steering. You may have no confidence in him or his crew, but you can only set your teeth hard. To speak to or at the man at the wheel would only make matters worse.

Mr Bright's denunciations do not stop at the wickedness of Ministers, and the imbecility of those who support them. The daily press comes in for its share of the gentle handling which seems to be the characteristic of theoretical lovers of peace. Norman Macleod once said:—

"A tract of the Peace Society may be written by a pen guided by a more bitter personal dislike than any sword wielded by the hero of a hundred fights."

And what he says of tracts is true of speeches. Men who think their nation should submit to any insult and give up any right rather than draw a sword or fire a shot, are found stabbing right and left at reputations, public and private, with all the violence of hatred and the blindness of rage. And so we have the spectacle of Mr Bright, the champion of the will of majorities, the ex-trumpeter of the virtues of

cheap newspapers, hacking and thrusting at both with the only sword that peace-society principles sanction,—that unruly member which no man can tame. Thus do members of every estate of the nation, except the highest—even including his own favourite, the cheap press—come under the shower of his blows. The same Mr Bright who gloried over the establishment of a daily and cheap press, praising its wisdom to the skies, and pronouncing its influence for good (in other words, for Liberalism) to be incalculable, is now found denouncing Liberal newspapers as “base,” because they decline to condemn a foreign policy which, if it has faults, is at least intelligible and workable, and prefer it to trying to find another amidst the numberless inconsistent proposals of self-confident but disunited opposition. There are two views which may be taken of the newspaper press. The one is, that it is an important influence in forming and directing public opinion; the other, that it follows the current of public opinion and gives it expression. The truth probably lies equidistant between the two. The newspaper press catches the tone of that undefinable part of society, which may be called influential on whatever side of politics, and following it, aids in bringing forward general society to the adoption of the opinions discerned as dominant among the influential. But whatever view may be taken of the influence of newspapers, it is plain that the Liberalism which is now represented by the opponents of the Government can derive little comfort from its present attitude. When Mr Bright accuses newspapers of baseness, it must be Liberal papers he refers to. Even his unreasoning fury could not use that epithet against Conservative organs. They may be of the “fool

and imbecile” class, but they cannot be accused of baseness in holding the same views as are expressed by their own party, especially when they are encouraged by seeing that many of the other party are of the same opinion. And what are the Liberal papers on whom his wrath falls? Those of the largest circulation among the dailies, and those most read among the weeklies, whether leading or following public opinion, have condemned the Liberal opposition as unwise and unpatriotic; have approved of the Government’s “insane, immoral, and wicked” deeds, and joined the ranks of the “fools and imbeciles.” And why is this? Is it because they have ceased to hold the general principles of the Liberal creed, and have turned Conservative? Most certainly not. It is because they see that some Liberals are prepared to sacrifice principle to party, and that other Liberals are prepared to uphold principle before party. It is because they know that Liberalism cannot retain any repute if the feeling becomes impressed on the national mind that it means dishonour to the country, and peace at any price. It is because they know that the country will not listen to the silver-streak policy when the affairs of the whole of the empire are under discussion. It is because they are assured that the spirit of the nation is still that which Pitt expressed in answer to the Opposition, in similar circumstances to those which have surrounded the present Government, when he said—

“As a sincere lover of peace, I cannot be content with its nominal attainment: I must be desirous of pursuing that system which promises to attain in the end the permanent enjoyment of its blessings for this country and for Europe. As a sincere lover of peace, I will not sacrifice it by grasp-

ing at the shadow when the reality is not in truth within my reach."

The anger in which a disorganised Opposition has clothed itself, and which is the cover of wounded vanity and party disappointment, must take the form of patriotic wrath. But that it is a disguise only, cannot be more surely made plain than by pointing to the fact of its being limited to declamation, and taking no defined or statesman-like aspect. When patriotic indignation truly exists, it will present itself in the form of an intelligible and honestly-stated counter-policy, crystallising its heated elements into compactness, not dissipating them in explosions. When a party which has long been insulted and vilified, and declared stupid and behind the times by their political opponents, obtains the reins of power, and holds them with practically undiminished strength during the whole of one of the most eventful and longest Parliaments of modern times, party disappointment is natural, and the expression of it in pretty strong terms not altogether unreasonable. But when the same opponents have to face, not only political disappointment, but a dilemma such as now presents its horns to the Liberals, there is small ground for wonder that their utterances should be those of men at their wits' end. Nor is it likely to diminish the distracted condition of the disappointed ones if the fact be that the horns were nurtured and sharpened by their own efforts, under the delusion that they were providing themselves with the means of boring down their enemies. The points for impalement are clear enough. The Government policy has either been, on the whole, good and satisfactory, or as bad as its detractors have represented it to be. If good, it has been so, although its course has

not been along the Liberal path, and has met with bitter opposition at every step. Therefore, in that view, Liberal prophecy has been made foolish, and Liberal policy (if such there be at present), ridiculous. If the policy has been bad, then this most unpleasant fact stares Liberals in the face, that, bad as it is, it has been supported by their own partisans, both in Parliament and in the press—the plain inference being that they themselves had utterly failed to suggest any better or more feasible policy, or were felt by their own friends to be in such a disorganised condition, that to transfer the reins of Government to their hands would be disastrous. In short, either good Conservative government has proved possible, to the bringing of ridicule on Liberal conceits, or the country has preferred a seat in the frying-pan to a fall into the fire. Thus it comes about that Liberalism is found, after six years of exile from office, unable to take up any defined position worthy of a great party. With the terrible horns on either side, it can make no definite move. "Out with Lord Beaconsfield" is the only policy which can be said to be in any sense formulated. As was said the other day at the Liberal Midland Counties Conference, at which an embryo Radical statesman was the shining light—

"When they had turned out the present Government, then it would be time for the Liberals to consult among themselves as to the best course to be pursued."

All beyond this is mere criticism, acrid and abundant enough, but not what the country has a right to expect from a party so boastful of its wisdom and capacity as that which appropriates the title of Liberal, particularly at a time when Liberals loudly proclaim that the salvation of the country depends on their ob-

taining office. It is quite true, as was observed in the 'Times,' that a constant *mitraille* of criticism is of great value in parliamentary warfare, and tends gradually to weaken the position of a Government. But a perfect hail of critical small-shot will be useless in the end, unless the troops that are to be brought to the assault for which it has cleared the way, are led by commanders who have one plan, and are themselves united both in spirit and discipline. Want of unity in the plan of assault, and indefiniteness in the instructions, do not generally conduce to success. Discordant war-cries will neither alarm the defenders nor animate the attack.

Liberalism, it has been correctly observed by a member of the party, must have a cry. In no other way can its incongruous elements be kept from friction, or from flying off at a tangent to their special centres of attraction. The Conservative party may congratulate itself, and feel also highly honoured, as it becomes more apparent from day to day that Liberals can find no better cry to help them back to office than the political "*à Berlin!*" which is expressed in the words, "Down with the Tories!" The country asks

—and apparently is to be allowed to ask in vain—"What then?" Mr Gladstone speaks of the coming election as the most momentous of the twelve in which he has taken part. At such a crisis is the nation to have no definite and statesmanlike utterance on its future policy from the great men of Liberalism? If not, the inference to be drawn is obvious. There is no policy to state, or if there be one, the statement of it is kept back of purpose, from fear of the consequences. Mere words, such as "Out with this detestable Government," and "Peace, retrenchment and reform," will at such a time deceive no patriotic man. The country is scarcely likely to be content to accept a Liberalism which makes nothing plain, unless it be that it has lost its temper and its manners. A policy of unsettling things at home "with desperate determination," and leaving things abroad to settle themselves, because other nations have larger armies than ours, may be listened to by Lord Hartington with "content," but it can never commend itself to men who are neither seeking office, nor prepared to worship *any* idol that is paraded in the trappings of Liberalism.

THE LATE JOHN BLACKWOOD.

Born at Edinburgh, 7th December 1818 ; Died at Strathtyrum, St Andrews,
29th October 1879.

LARGE, indeed, is the circle which the death of John Blackwood has touched with a sense of personal loss and regret ; and fully and gracefully has the press already given expression to this widespread feeling. There is, however, an inner circle of friends and collaborators who were bound to him by a tie of peculiar significance ; for in it what may be termed the "business element" derived at once strength and dignity from the personal regard and the intellectual sympathy with which it was interwoven. And to this small society his death means a real calamity ; for while it bereaves them of a beloved friend, it takes from them a literary companion and counsellor whose value was truly inestimable. In this Magazine, then, over which he so long presided, and for which they have worked—feeling, indeed, that under such presidency their labours were labours of love—it seems fitting that some memorial of him should appear, at their instance.

The present writer holds it a high privilege to be permitted to act, in this matter, as their representative, though he is not so presumptuous as to suppose that he has any claim to do so other than that which rests upon the very affectionate intimacy which subsisted between their departed friend and himself.

The life of John Blackwood, outside the sphere of that literary work which filled it, and in so far as it was unconnected with the lives of eminent men of letters, was not an eventful one, and its simple annals can be recorded in a very brief space. One of the younger children of William Blackwood, the eminent publisher and founder of this Magazine, he was born in Edinburgh on the 7th December 1818. The earlier part of his education he received in the High School of Edinburgh, and it was completed, as far as the ordinary routine of instruction was concerned, at the University of his native city. And here we must not omit to remark, what may have had a considerable influence in shaping the bent of his young intelligence, that the home of his childhood and early youth was a place of daily and familiar resort to such men as Sir Walter Scott and Christopher North, not to mention a dozen other names all associated with the best of our literature ; and it is difficult to think that such an atmosphere—so surcharged with wit and wisdom—could be habitually breathed by a bright youth without yielding him some intellectual nutriment and inspiration. Be that as it may, his education was not to be confined to the training and influences of home, with the tuition of school and college. His eldest brother, who, from his

father's death, acted as the lad's guardian and second parent, had very early detected that he was possessed of no ordinary gifts, and even of a special aptitude for the career which he was destined eventually to adopt. He resolved, therefore, that "the little editor," as John was playfully nicknamed, should have every benefit which a "liberal education," in the largest sense, could afford; and, as a consequence, the young student, at the close of his college career, was sent abroad to travel and reside on the Continent for a period which, in the event, extended to three years. During that time he enjoyed all the advantages which the wisdom of our ancestors attributed to what was called "the grand tour," and which were then looked upon as the monopoly of youths of aristocratic condition. He enjoyed them, indeed, in an exceptional degree; for while, like the rest, he saw men and cities, with much of the profit implied in the phrase, he was not permitted to drift from place to place, at the dictates of youthful caprice. On the contrary, he was accompanied by a tutor of much erudition, who had already acquired a public reputation for refined scholarship and literary taste; and he also enjoyed, during a portion, at least, of his travels, the companionship of his brother Alexander, by this time the editor, but obliged temporarily to abandon his post in search of health. Under the guidance of these two admirable mentors, Blackwood studied much of the history of the past in the scenes of its most stirring events. His taste was cultivated by the study of Art's finest triumphs, ancient and modern; while his mental stores were enriched by the acquisition of new languages, by an introduction to new fields of literary excursion, and by association with a great variety of clever men, who looked upon life from points of view hitherto unfamiliar to him. We doubt not that his shrewd faculty for discerning character owed much to this early and well-directed acquaintance with the literary, political, and diplomatic society of the Continent. Blackwood himself ever and most gratefully recognised the obligation which his brother had conferred upon him in thus directing his youth; and he always looked back with fondness to that period, and especially to the months then spent at Rome, which he regarded as the spring and budding-time of his intellectual life.

But a double career lay before him; he was to be a publisher as well as an editor, and hitherto his training had been conducted with exclusive reference to the editorial function. It was now necessary that he should leave the pleasant fields in which he had been expatiating, and acquire in a London office the knowledge and habits of a man of business. We can well imagine that to pass from the Pincian to Paternoster Row involved somewhat of a wrench; but the movement was effected, and, in 1839, he entered the well-known house of Whittaker & Co. "to learn business." It would appear that he devoted himself to the work set before him with characteristic thoroughness, for his term of probation was short; and in the following

year he was placed in charge of a branch of the Edinburgh house which was at that time opened in Pall Mall. His management was very successful, and secured the cordial recognition of his elder brothers—Alexander, Robert, and, in later years, of Major William Blackwood,—for whom we can well believe that he worked *con amore*, remembering, as we do, that he always spoke with enthusiastic gratitude of their solicitude for his welfare, and of their thoughtfulness in relieving him, as much as was possible, of mere business drudgery, in favour of more congenial duties. During the six years of his superintendence of the London business it was considerably developed; and while the books which he obtained for publication were neither few nor insignificant, as a recruiter for the staff of the Magazine he achieved several marked successes. As one of the first magnitude may be instanced the case of Lord Lytton, whose first connection with the Blackwoods was due to their young London representative; and beginning, in 1842, with the publication of the translation of the 'Poems and Ballads of Schiller,' ended, at the very close of the noble author's life, with the appearance in the Magazine of that remarkable aftermath of his genius—'The Parisians.'

Though Blackwood's life in London was at this time mainly occupied by business pursuits, the years spent there had an important influence on his future career as an editor. By inheritance, through professional connections and from personal bias, the young man's friends and associates were almost exclusively individuals of intellectual mark. Of these, some of the seniors had achieved their fame in the earliest days of 'Maga's' glory; others were destined to assist their young contemporary in maintaining her matured reputation; while others, and these, it must be admitted, not the least eminent, had reached, or were reaching, positions of distinction and authority through other channels. Foremost among the latter may be mentioned Thackeray, whose literary productions were now beginning to place him in the foremost rank of novelists; and Mr Delane, who already, though a mere youth, was editing the 'Times' with the success which attended the whole of his connection with that great journal. Between these three there were few apparent points of similarity, while many grounds of controversy were to be found in their several literary and political convictions; but, as iron sharpens iron, this circumstance was an obvious advantage to young men, all destined to occupy editorial chairs; and, as a matter of fact, it only served to tighten the bond of fraternity which connected them till death severed it. We may here mention that Thackeray, though so close a friend of Blackwood's, and sometimes for weeks an inmate of his house in Scotland, was never a contributor to the Magazine.

In the year 1845 Blackwood returned to Edinburgh, on the death of his eldest brother Alexander, and in the following spring he succeeded to the editorship. Six years later, the death of his brother Robert placed him—along with Major Blackwood, who joined him in

Edinburgh in 1850—at the head of the publishing business also; and in this position of double responsibility he continued for the rest of his life, with a resulting influence on the national literature, which will undoubtedly prove neither ephemeral nor insignificant. His marriage followed two years later; but of it we shall only venture to say that it was the crowning happiness of a singularly happy life. Henceforth he settled down in the pleasant lines of a routine, which, though a routine, was full of freshness and variety. Winter and the early spring were spent in Edinburgh; then followed a sojourn of some weeks in London, occasionally varied by a Continental trip; and the remainder of the year was given to Strathtyrum—a country residence in Fife, of which he was the tenant for the last twenty years of his life. This was the part of the year which he most enjoyed; here he was seen to the best advantage; and those who were in the habit of visiting him at Strathtyrum will not cease to cherish their recollections of that delightful place. It is situated within a mile of St Andrews, which, in addition to its academic and historic associations, enjoys the distinction of being the metropolis of the national game of golf, to which Blackwood was devoted. From the grounds around his house glimpses of the far-famed *Links* could be obtained; and when the sunshine of a summer morning lighted them up, revealing here and there a group of red-coated players, the editor used to utter serio-comic lamentations over the hard fate which drove him to his study, and kept him from “the only occupation worthy of a reasonable being.” For, although he played the game almost daily, it was only on occasion that he allowed it to seduce him in the forenoons, when two or three hours were almost invariably given to work. That such a moderate portion of his time sufficed to overtake the vast amount of reading and correspondence exacted by his editorial position, was often a marvel to his friends; but the true marvel was his singular power of concentration; and another solution of the mystery lay in the fact that his work—in which he took the greatest delight—was never entirely relinquished for a formal holiday. Those who chanced to associate with him when he was away from home—in London or on country visits—will remember that his table was always covered with manuscripts and proofs of articles. For he carried his work with him wherever he went, and always found a spare hour or so to devote to what was not more a duty than a relaxation. When the elements of labour and recreation are thus happily blended, it can scarcely be doubted that the results, as to the success and happiness of the worker, will be infinitely superior to those extracted from a life divided between feverish spasms of high-pressure application, and almost equally feverish spasms of laborious holiday-making. Blackwood's case is a strong one to the point. When his business was over for the day he sallied forth to the links, and brought to bear on the game as much concentration and

energy as he had devoted to the forenoon's work. Most golfers who have graduated on the Links of St Andrews, will remember the skill and ardour with which he played the game, in some divisions of which he had few superiors; nor will they forget his humorous perception of the exaggerated earnestness and solemnity with which he himself and his *confrères* discussed the incidents of a match when it was over. His pleasant face and unfailing geniality and humour will long be held in affectionate remembrance at the Royal and Ancient Golf Club—of which he was captain a few years before his death—by all connected with it, from the gallant and venerable gentleman who is its chairman to the whole clan of "professionals," with honest Tom Morris at their head.

The evenings of these happy summer days were given to the society with which he loved to fill the walls of Strathtyrum in an unbroken stream. Many celebrities, both English and foreign, were often to be met in the circle of which he was the centre; but on looking back, we are inclined to say that to the host himself, though ever the least pretentious of all, was due in a very large degree the charm which is associated in our memory with these often remarkable gatherings. For, though an unaggressive talker, and sometimes even too silent, his fund of anecdote, grave and gay, was inexhaustible, while his quaint humour and taste enabled him to employ it to the best advantage; and added to this was his peculiar faculty of extracting from the genius of others its best contribution to the requirements of the hour. Thus, when he was in the vein and his company was congenial, we have been present at *symposia* which were worthy of the best traditions of the "Noctes," and might have made the immortal revellers of the "Blue Parlour" look to their laurels. On the other hand, we have also been present when graver converse occupied the night, and when the first conceptions of literary schemes and achievements, destined one day to be famous, sprang from the friction of genius with his suggestive and often inspiring mind. On other evenings, when the claims of society permitted, almost no amount of bad weather would keep him from his favourite stroll on a charming walk within the grounds of Strathtyrum, which, leading through the shelter of a high plantation, commanded, from one of its extremities, a view over the sea. To catch a glimpse, from this point, of the revolving light on the Bell Rock, was the ostensible object of the promenade; and the "viewing" of the light, if the state of the atmosphere permitted, was a duty never overlooked. But it served more important ends, for on the journey to and fro, in moonlight, by starlight, or in the dark, Blackwood always found the influence of this place and this quiet hour very quickening to thought; and when any knotty point had to be solved, or if any momentous decision were in suspense, it was here that he very often found the happy inspiration which relieved his mind. Such was the quiet tenor of his life, the great facts of which were the great books he published.

The red-letter days in his calendar were those on which he discovered a "new genius," or witnessed the triumphs of others whose powers his acute perception had been the first to recognise.

An idea got abroad long ago that the editorship of 'Maga' was, even from the earliest days, in, so to speak, commission; and, in spite of many authoritative assurances that "'Blackwood's Magazine' has never, in any sense, been edited by any one but a member of the Blackwood family," statements to the contrary have been persistently, we had almost said perversely, reiterated. When John Blackwood first assumed the editorship, the great Christopher North—as was natural, perhaps, in so old a friend and bulwark of the Magazine—was inclined to offer his advice more frequently, and in a more dictatorial manner than was altogether palatable to the young editor, who often told us that one of the most unpleasant moments of his life was that in which he felt constrained to intimate to his illustrious friend, firmly, but with the great respect which he always entertained for him, that, as he himself was alone responsible for the conduct of the Magazine, so he always meant to conduct it according to his own views,—exactly as his father had done before him. This declaration, which in no way affected the pleasant relations subsisting between the two friends, may perhaps finally dispose of any false impressions which still exist as to the editorship in past times. Their existence may be explained by the personal unobtrusiveness of John Blackwood and his predecessors, which was so great that perhaps many, even constant, readers of the Magazine have, up to this time, had but a hazy notion as to the editor's personality, and no conception whatever of the manner of man he was. The same self-subordination concealed, even from people who knew his position, how remarkable were the qualities which fitted him to adorn it; and, indeed, we believe that his powers and acquirements, and the tact and *savoir faire* which distinguished him, were never fully apprehended by any but his intimates and collaborators.

Of this latter class, two representative men—Wilson and Aytoun, to whom the editorship was frequently ascribed—always spoke of his literary judgment as worthy of an extraordinary consideration; and we happen to know that they admitted that, on many occasions, the late editor's tenacity of his own opinion, when it had been in conflict with their own, was justified by the event.

The more recent testimony of a man of letters of world-wide celebrity is before us. In connection with Blackwood's lamented death, he writes: "I have known no man—I think I may say there is no man left among us—in whom was joined so much literary culture with so clear an understanding of the nature of his business. As a critic he was excellent, joining to the appreciation of what was absolutely good, the much rarer faculty of perceiving what was, for the purpose, good enough. Added to this there was an exquisite feeling of what a gentleman should,

or should not, do, in all emergencies. His loss will be very difficult to fill to the literary world at large. To those connected with him in business there can be no supplying it."

With regard to his editorial qualifications, we are reminded that from earliest life he had been an extensive reader, and that his knowledge of English *belles lettres* was complete. Another of his strong points was familiarity with the history of modern English and Continental politics, which included an intimacy with what may be called the "inner life" of the Conservative party, from the days of Catholic Emancipation downwards. All this knowledge was made readily available by a very clear and tenacious memory, so that, in his office, it was often considered as safe to consult him as to appeal to an authoritative book of reference. But as to exactitude about matters of fact he was anxiously sensitive, and constantly warned his contributors to verify statements before committing them to paper.

In his literary judgment he was equally self-supporting, and, indeed, absolutely self-reliant. No man was ever less affected by "the fallacy of great names." In appraising the value of a contribution he was able to forget either the *prestige* or the obscurity of its author; and the article was accepted or rejected on its merits alone. This habit had its reflection in the anonymous system to which he jealously adhered in this Magazine; and thus, while in no other periodical had young authors of genius so fair a chance of immediate recognition, on the other hand, the greatest celebrity knew that, here, he could not hope to pass careless work under cover of his reputation. Whatever argument there may be for a contrary plan, we are confident that the anonymous system was best suited to the far-reaching scheme of the Blackwoods, which did not merely seek to provide for the present wants and success of the Magazine, but equally comprehended its requirements even in the remote future.

A very notable characteristic of the late editor was the rapidity with which he got at the gist of a book or an article; and he seemed able to discover, by a mere glance or two through the manuscript, whether a contribution had merit enough to justify farther perusal, or whether it might safely be laid aside. And if his literary judgments were rapid, when reached they were final. He decided once and for all, and there the matter rested, without any farther worrying over *pros* and *cons*. This, with his power of concentration, enabled him to compass in an hour what would have exacted from most other men the sacrifice of half the day. Another gift which largely contributed to his success as an editor was an intuitive perception of the kind of work likely to exercise the genius of this or that writer to the best advantage. It is to this that readers of the Magazine have been mainly indebted for one of its most attractive features in recent years, and which has consisted in the treatment of a variety of important topics in serial articles, often extend-

ing over a good many numbers. These series were almost always undertaken at the direct suggestion of the editor, who was constantly on the look-out for subjects on which the public appeared, from time to time, to require or to desire instruction. When the proper subject had been detected, he laid his hand unhesitatingly on the proper person to deal with it. The same remark applies to the series of works which has already opened the treasury of ancient classic lore to English readers, and also to that other series which is now introducing the masterpieces of foreign literature to the same class of students.

To this keen perception of the qualities of men and books, and of the ever-shifting phases of public taste and opinion, he added that tact and temper and generosity in his dealings with literary men, without which the highest editorial qualifications would almost be as nothing. What was true in the days of Horace of the irritable brotherhood is true at the present hour; and he who would control the varied developments of what Americans would call their "cussedness," must indeed have the iron hand in the glove of velvet. But we may safely say that no firmer and yet gentler grasp ever held together a more varied and at the same time loyal team, and controlled them to his and their own complete content. His sense of humour stood him in good stead here. Often, when an editorial suggestion had fallen, like a spark, on combustible vanity, and produced an explosion, a perfectly good-tempered reply arrested farther conflagration; some quaint illustration would give a comical aspect to the dispute, and, while it soothed the susceptibilities of the author, generally left the editor master of the situation. We have seen scores of such instances, and have ourselves retired from such contests in mirthful discomfiture. But, in truth, his suggestions were always made in a way to disarm irritation. The author of an accepted contribution might, indeed, lay his account with receiving evidences of editorial care in the copious annotations on the proof-sheets which reached him; but these were always put forward as the remarks of a sympathetic and respectful critic, and by no means obtruded as the dictatorial decisions of superior intelligence. Those who have worked longest with him will most readily admit that, as time went on, they were more and more inclined, in all disputed points of literary taste, to submit to the decision arrived at by his acute and watchful critical faculty.

It was his constant desire to maintain happy personal relations with his contributors, and almost all who worked for him enjoyed and returned his friendship, which in many cases ripened into the warmest regard. It was also his amiable ambition to establish between the contributors themselves a footing of acquaintanceship, and, where practicable, of friendly intimacy. Thus any one who joined the fraternity was generally introduced to as many as possible of its existing members, and especially to such as were likely to have a good deal in common with the novice. All

this was prompted by the impulse of his kindly nature, and by that alone ; but no outcome of a deliberate policy could better have subserved the interests alike of editor and contributor, of author and publisher. In pecuniary dealings with literary men he was discreetly munificent. He appeared to have the interests of his clients as much at heart as his own ; and his evidence before the Copyright Commission showed him to be the true friend of authors. So much so, indeed, that, from the publishers' point of view, he must have been somewhat heterodox ; for certain it is that he did not look upon the filling of a publisher's pockets as the final cause of all literary creations. From the report of a speech which he delivered at the Scott Centenary Banquet at St Andrews, we extract his own account of his own relations with the author class : " Much was said of quarrels between authors and publishers, but he was happy to say that they were not within his knowledge ; on the contrary, he could tell a very different tale. Authors had been his dearest friends and companions all the days of his life. To them he could turn in joy or sorrow for safe and certain sympathy." In the same speech he alluded to some of his special literary friendships, and paid a touching tribute to the memory of Aytoun, who was the dearest of all his intimates.

In politics, Blackwood's well-known Conservatism, if strong, was enlightened and progressive ; for it recognised the spirit of the age, it was subservient to the logic of facts, and constantly subordinated mere party considerations and personal predilections to what he conceived to be the true interests of the country. As a good instance of the point of view from which he regarded measures theoretically repugnant to him, but which he accepted as inevitable from the state of public opinion, we may quote two sentences from his speech at the Disraeli Banquet in Edinburgh in 1867. Talking of the Reform Bill of that year, he says : " It became our duty to make the best of it for the country. . . . I rejoice, therefore, to see such a gathering as this, which, from its constituents, proves abundantly, that the old party are determined to come forward and work for the country, under the new state of things as under the old. I hold such conduct wiser and bolder far than that of those—happily few in number—who, having failed to give effect to their own opinions, throw up their hands and retire from the struggle." But it is unnecessary to enlarge on his political opinions, as they have been expressed continually and accurately in the pages of the Magazine ; and we shall only add that they did not affect his literary alliances, which included writers of many different shades of political conviction.

The creative and the critical faculties are seldom combined in a very high degree in one person ; and partly, perhaps, for this reason—partly from a determination to keep his editorial judgment unclouded by the preoccupations of personal authorship—his own contributions to his own

Magazine, from first to last, would not occupy more than a very few pages, and chiefly took the shape of obituary tributes to contributors whom he had highly valued. Those who had the happiness to correspond with him, however, were charmed with the ease and grace of his epistolary style, and with the fine humour which made his letters so racy and delightful; and they would sometimes remonstrate with him against his unwillingness to address a larger audience. But he always excused himself on the grounds above stated, and he would modestly add that nothing from his own pen had ever satisfied his own critical fastidiousness.

We have spoken of his editorial qualifications and method; his editorial success speaks, we venture to think, for itself. We shall only remark that, under him, the Magazine has maintained, and even increased, the circulation and influence which it enjoyed under his predecessors, and this in spite of a greatly increased competition. And perhaps we, the humblest of the band of authors whom he gathered around him and maintained loyal to their allegiance, may be permitted to point to the fact, that among their number have been several whose fame in the future is not only as assured as their contemporary renown, but whose names Posterity will deem illustrious among the most illustrious in the annals of British literature.

We have dwelt much on Blackwood's intellectual power and on his literary attainments, and we feel that we have given too little prominence to those noble qualities of the heart which so deeply endeared him to his friends. Those who knew him well will not accuse us of over-partiality when we say that we cannot recall an unlovable trait in his character; and never was a man's nature so clearly discernible even by a superficial observer. When we think of the absent we remember them in connection with some particular attitude or gesture, or inflection of the voice, or characteristic look or phrase. And as we recall him, we recall the joyous heartiness, the unmistakable content, which lighted up, as it were, his manner as well as his face, when he welcomed an old friend. Nor shall we ever forget the quaint, half-shy, but altogether courteous fashion of his address, when a stranger was introduced to him; nor the rapidity with which his irresistible *bonhomie* levelled any barrier of formality; nor the obvious zest with which he surveyed one of his special parties at "The Garrick" or at Strathtyrum, when the *personnel* promised that the fun would be good; nor the gleeful and humorous way in which he would obtain a hearing for some one of the party who displayed symptoms of desiring to disburden his mind of "a good thing." On these and a hundred more of his familiarly-remembered social aspects, there was a delightful impress of freshness, simplicity, cordiality, and good-heartedness (especially charming in a man who had seen much of the world), which did not fail to captivate all, even the most morose and

moody of men. But of his many claims to affection we can hardly trust ourselves to speak; and, indeed, it is more in harmony with the gentle life which has just closed, that no high-sounding rhetoric should phrase an eulogium over it. We have remarked that, except as connected with his profession, it was uneventful; and as a nation is said to be happy which has no annals, so was his tranquil career undisturbed by those stormy episodes which light the page of history and biography with a lurid glare, but which bring anything but peace to the lives of men and nations. We have called his life a happy one, and it would be hard to see how such a life could fail to be happy, ennobled as it was through its whole course by unselfishness, and made gracious and beneficent by unfailing sympathy with the joys and sorrows of others.

As the twilight of life deepens, it is man's sad lot to see the comrades of his youth and manhood drop in swift succession by his side, depriving him, even at his utmost need, of the solace and delight which love and friendship give. And we close this tribute to our departed friend, feeling that henceforth for us the way must be more difficult and comfortless without that guiding light and kindly warmth which came to all from his companionship.

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